NO. 7

FBI in ACTION!

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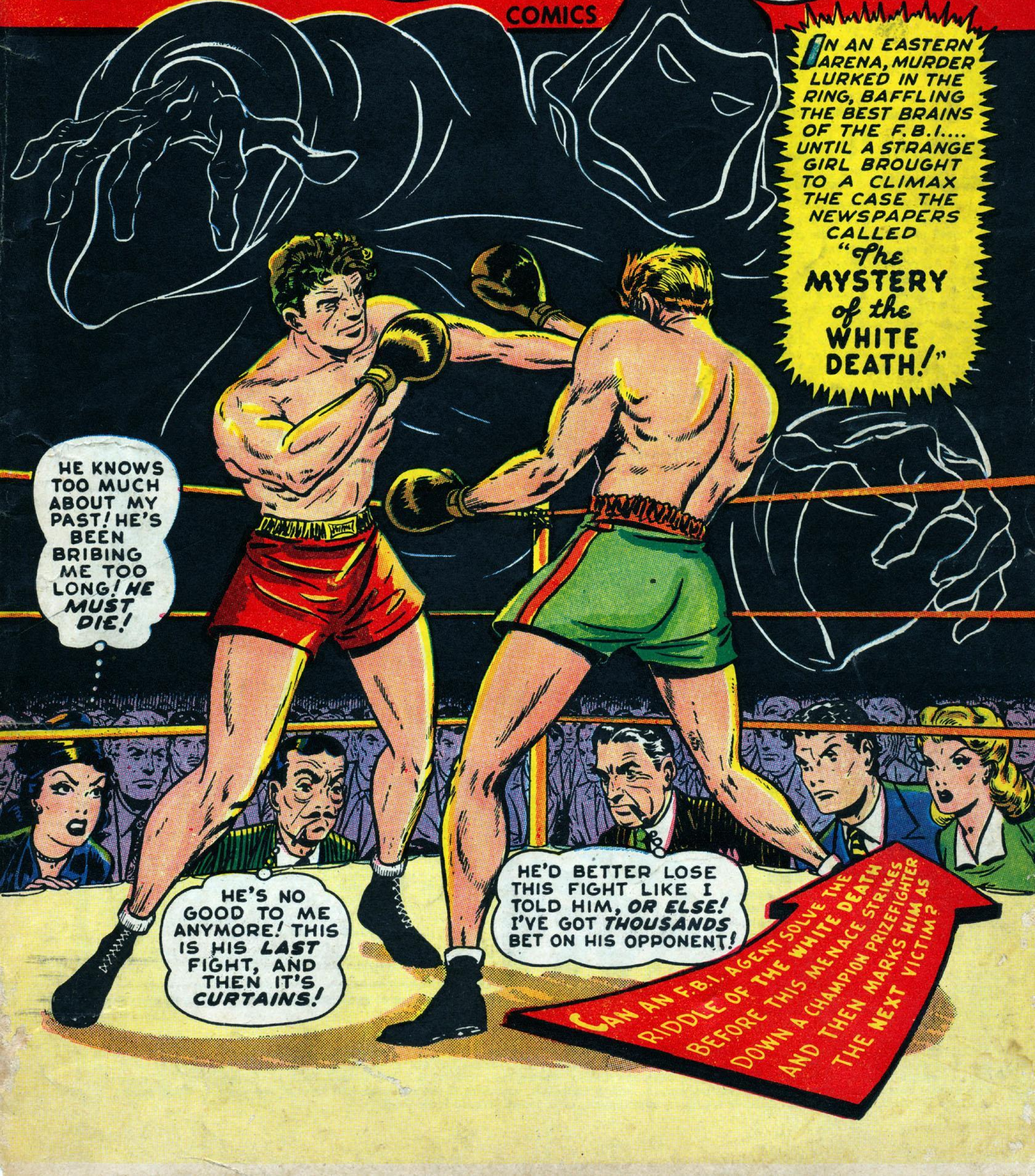
JUSTICE

COMICS


IN AN EASTERN ARENA, MURDER LURKED IN THE RING, BAFFLING THE BEST BRAINS OF THE F.B.I.... UNTIL A STRANGE GIRL BROUGHT TO A CLIMAX THE CASE THE NEWSPAPERS CALLED "The MYSTERY of the WHITE DEATH!"
HE KNOWS TOO MUCH ABOUT MY PAST! HE'S BEEN BRIBING ME TOO LONG! HE MUST DIE!
HE'S NO GOOD TO ME ANYMORE! THIS IS HIS LAST FIGHT, AND THEN IT'S CURTAINS!
HE'D BETTER LOSE THIS FIGHT LIKE I TOLD HIM, OR ELSE! I'VE GOT THOUSANDS BET ON HIS OPPONENT!
CAN AN F.B.I. AGENT SOLVE THE RIDDLE OF THE WHITE DEATH BEFORE THIS MENACE STRIKES DOWN A CHAMPION PRIZEFIGHTER AND THEN MARKS HIM AS THE NEXT VICTIM?

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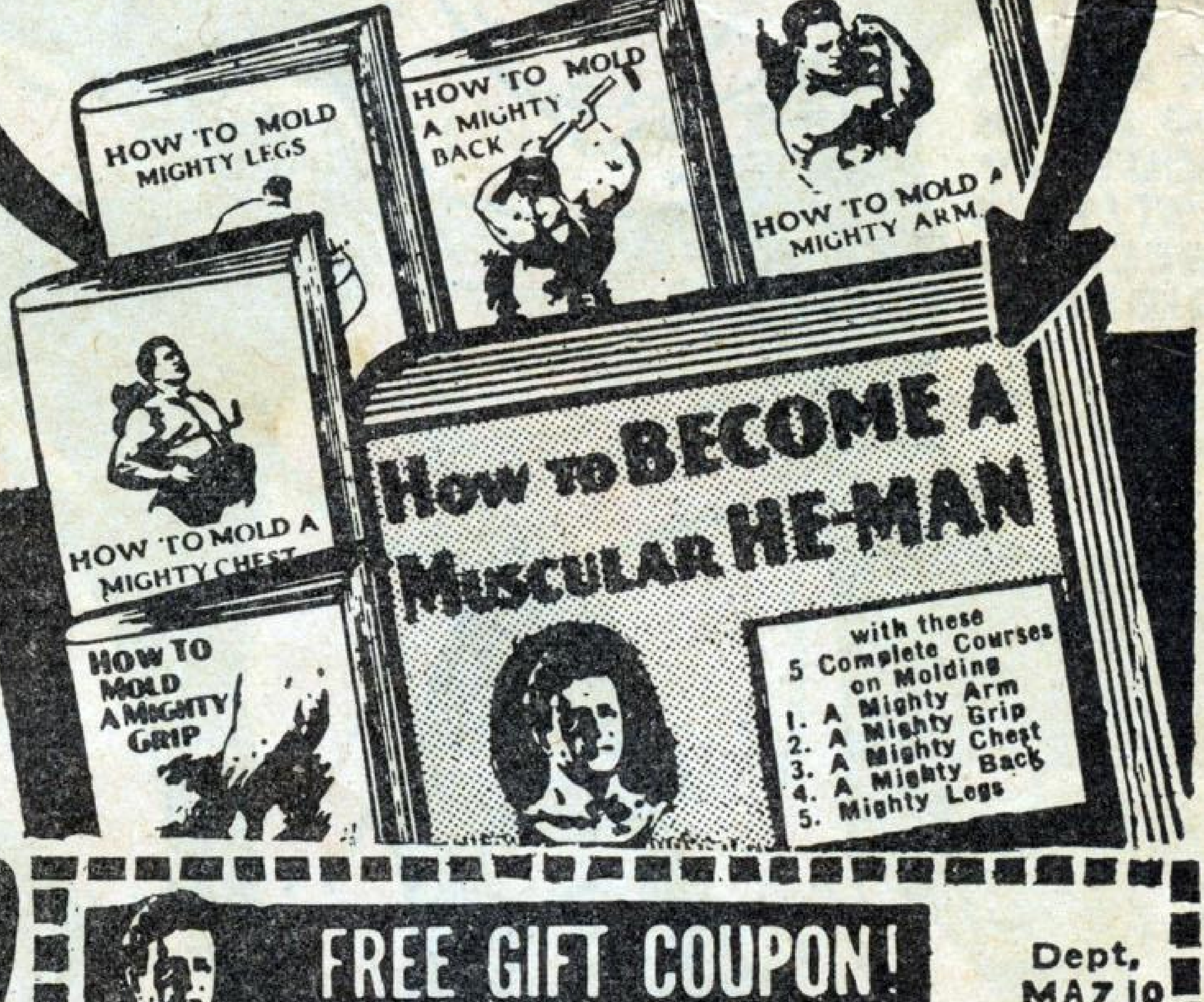
HOW TO MOLD MIGHTY LEGS
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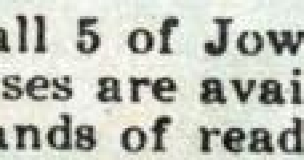

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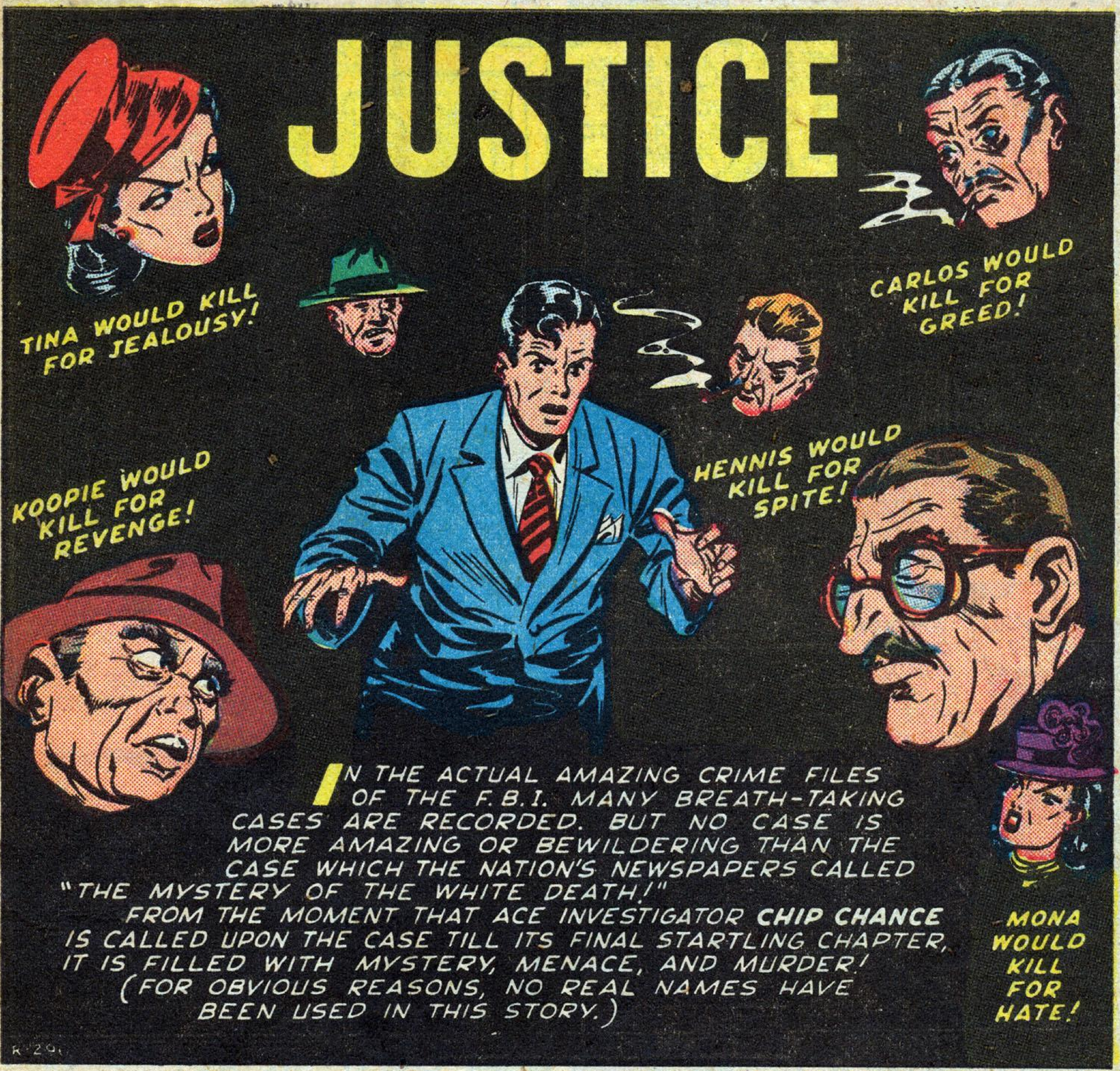
TINA WOULD KILL FOR JEALOUSY!
CARLOS WOULD KILL FOR GREED!
KOOPIE WOULD KILL FOR REVENGE!
HENNIS WOULD KILL FOR SPITE!
MONA WOULD KILL FOR HATE!
IN THE ACTUAL AMAZING CRIME FILES OF THE F.B.I. MANY BREATH-TAKING CASES ARE RECORDED. BUT NO CASE IS MORE AMAZING OR BEWILDERING THAN THE CASE WHICH THE NATION'S NEWSPAPERS CALLED "THE MYSTERY OF THE WHITE DEATH!" FROM THE MOMENT THAT ACE INVESTIGATOR CHIP CHANCE IS CALLED UPON THE CASE TILL ITS FINAL STARTLING CHAPTER, IT IS FILLED WITH MYSTERY, MENACE, AND MURDER! (FOR OBVIOUS REASONS, NO REAL NAMES HAVE BEEN USED IN THIS STORY.)
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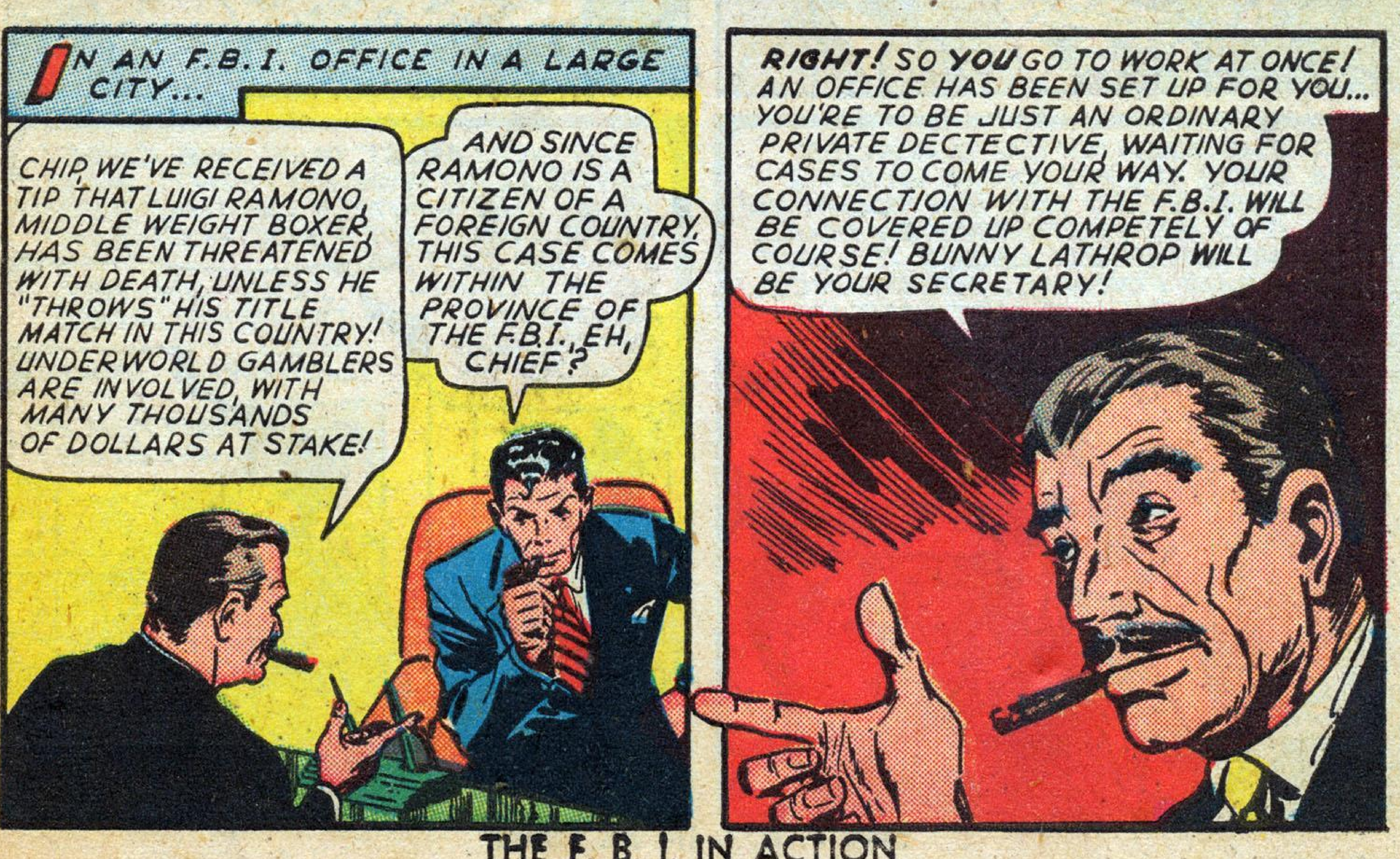
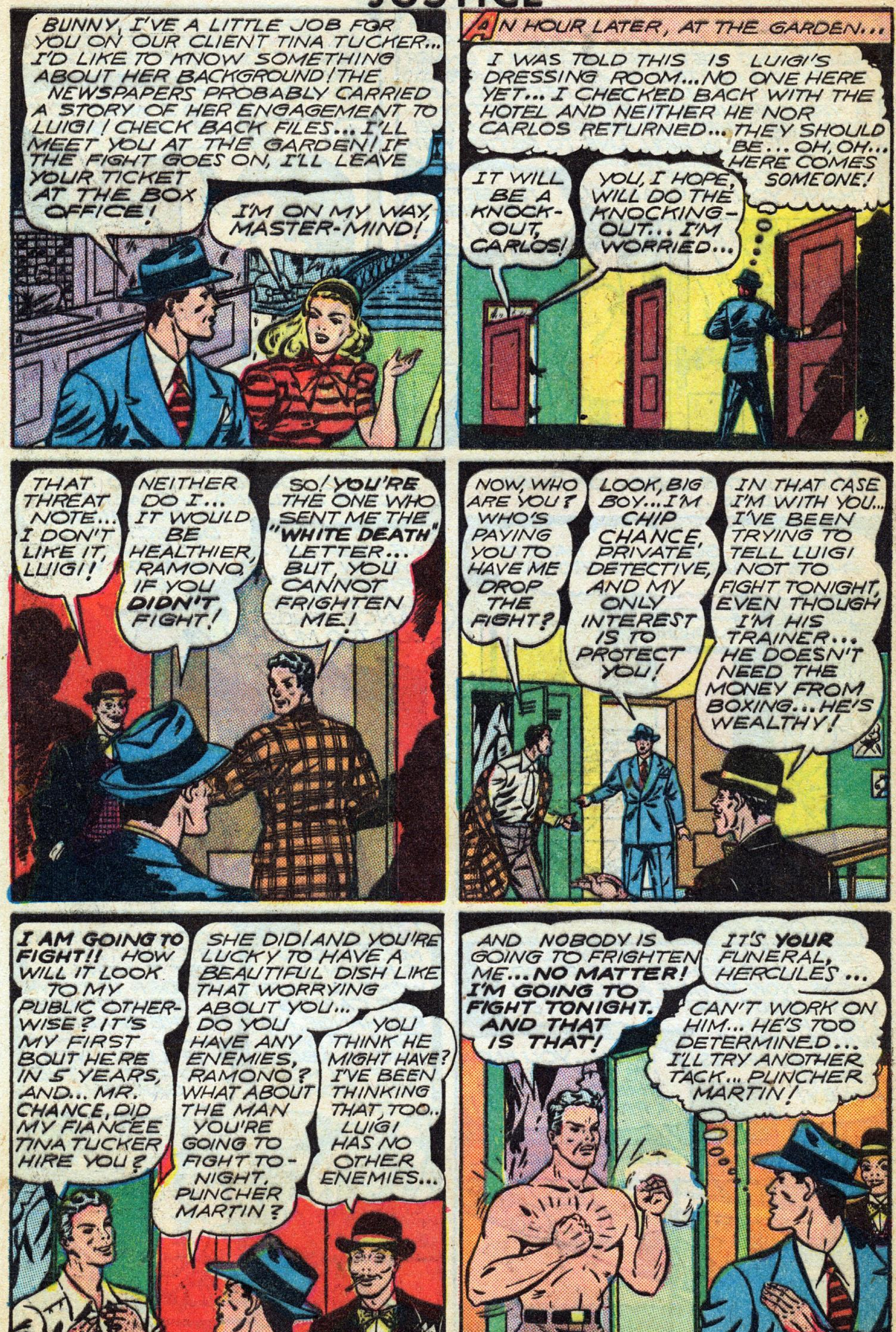

IN AN F.B.I. OFFICE IN A LARGE CITY...
CHIP, WE'VE RECEIVED A TIP THAT LUIGI RAMONO, MIDDLE WEIGHT BOXER, HAS BEEN THREATENED WITH DEATH, UNLESS HE "THROWS" HIS TITLE MATCH IN THIS COUNTRY! UNDERWORLD GAMBLERS ARE INVOLVED, WITH MANY THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS AT STAKE!
AND SINCE RAMONO IS A CITIZEN OF A FOREIGN COUNTRY, THIS CASE COMES WITHIN THE PROVINCE OF THE F.B.I., EH, CHIEF?
RIGHT! SO YOU GO TO WORK AT ONCE! AN OFFICE HAS BEEN SET UP FOR YOU... YOU'RE TO BE JUST AN ORDINARY PRIVATE DECTECTIVE, WAITING FOR CASES TO COME YOUR WAY. YOUR CONNECTION WITH THE F.B.I. WILL BE COVERED UP COMPETELY OF COURSE! BUNNY LATHROP WILL BE YOUR SECRETARY!

AND SO, A FEW DAYS LATER..
THIS SETUP LOOKS LIKE THE REAL McCOY, BUNNY! THE CHIEF HAS ONE OF OUR AGENTS STEERING A CERTAIN PARTY TO ME, WHO HAS ONE OF THE THREAT-NOTES SENT TO THE FIGHTER RAMONO!
AND WHEN THIS PARTY SHOWS UP WE START TO WORK?
THEN...
RIGHT... OH OH! THIS MAY BE HER NOW! GET SET, BUNNY!
CAN I HELP YOU, MISS...?
I'M TINA TUCKER!! I'M ENGAGED TO LUIGI RAMONO OF ARGENTINA. HE'S A MIDDLEWEIGHT BOXER ON TOUR HERE! HE RECEIVED THIS NOTE THREATENING HIS LIFE... YOU WERE RECOMMENDED TO ME TO TRACK DOWN THIS FIEND!
MMM, WHOEVER TYPED THIS WASN'T SO GOOD AT HITTING THE KEYS... A FEW LETTERS X'ED OUT... HOW COME YOU HAVE THIS NOTE, MISS TUCKER? DID RAMONO SEND YOU HERE?
LUIGI RAMONO: DO YOU WANT TO LIVEX? DOXXNT FIGHT PUXNCHER MARTIN AT THE SPORT GARDEN OR YOULL DIEX!
White Death
NO! I ACCIDENTLY CAME ACROSS THE NOTE ON HIS DESK WHEN I STOPPED BY TO SEE HIM TODAY. HE SAID IT CAME YESTERDAY BY MAIL, AND HE LAUGHED ABOUT IT... BUT I'M AFRAID FOR HIM... MR. CHANCE, I LOVE LUIGI SO. WE MET LAST MONTH HERE IN TOWN, AND IT WAS LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT... MR. CHANCE, THE FIGHT'S TONIGHT!
SHORT NOTICE, FOR ANYTHING I CAN DO!
2
BUT YOU MUST TAKE THE CASE! URGE LUIGI NOT TO FIGHT... AND FIND THE WRITER OF THAT THREAT NOTE... WILL THIS $500.00 CHECK I MADE OUT AS YOUR DOWN-PAYMENT PERSUADE YOU TO ---
500--UH.. YES, I'M PERSUADED, MISS TUCKER!
500... HE'D BETTER BE ...OR ELSE!

LUIGI'S STOPPING AT THE CASA BIANCA HOTEL ON 54TH... NOW I MUST HURRY HOME AND GET DRESSED FOR A DINNER PARTY I'M INVITED TO AT MR. MANGROSS'S... A WEALTHY MAN I MET RECENTLY AND A WONDERFUL BUSINESS CONNECTION FOR LUIGI WHEN HE RETIRES FROM THE RING... I KNOW HE'LL LIVE TO RETIRE WITH A CLEVER DETECTIVE LIKE YOU ON THE CASE! THANK YOU, MR. CHANCE!
I'LL GET BUSY RIGHT AWAY!
...WITH A VISIT TO LUIGI'S... ALL RIGHT, BUNNY, GET YOUR BONNET ON! THAT IS, IF YOU WANT TO GO ALONG!
DO I WANT TO? TRY AND STOP ME!
WHILE IN THE LOBBY OF CHIP'S BUILDING...
THERE SHE GOES... I'LL HAVE TO PHONE IN ABOUT THIS PRONTO!
TELEPHONES
BOSS, IT'S KOOPIE... I TAILED THE TUCKER DOLL AND SHE WENT UP TO CHIP CHANCE, DETECTIVE... A "PRIVATE EYE." WHAT DO WE DO?
WE KEEP AN EYE ON THE "PRIVATE EYE"!... JUST IN CASE CHANCE FINDS OUT TOO MUCH!
NOT LONG AFTER...
HERE WE ARE... A PRETTY CLASSY PLACE. OUR FIGHTER HAS GOOD TASTE. NOW TO HAVE A TALK WITH LUIGI ABOUT THAT THREAT NOTE! I'VE A HUNCH "WHITE DEATH" MEANS BUSINESS! HOP OUT, HONEY!
UHUH... YOU KNOW, IT'S THE FIRST TIME I'M MEETING A PRIZE FIGHTER!
CASA BIANCA HOTEL
3
BUT...
MR. RAMONO IS NOT IN. HE WENT OUT WITH MR. CARLOS ESCHANGE, HIS TRAINER, YOU KNOW.. ABOUT HALF AN HOUR AGO! SORRY, SIR!
NOT HALF AS SORRY AS I AM... IT'S PAST 7 NOW... WONDER IF THEY'RE GOING STRAIGHT TO THE GARDEN...
IF LUIGI LIVES TO GET TO THE GARDEN...


BUNNY, I'VE A LITTLE JOB FOR YOU ON OUR CLIENT TINA TUCKER... I'D LIKE TO KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT HER BACKGROUND! THE NEWSPAPERS PROBABLY CARRIED A STORY OF HER ENGAGEMENT TO LUIGI! CHECK BACK FILES... I'LL MEET YOU AT THE GARDEN! IF THE FIGHT GOES ON, I'LL LEAVE YOUR TICKET AT THE BOX OFFICE!
I'M ON MY WAY, MASTER-MIND!
AN HOUR LATER, AT THE GARDEN...
I WAS TOLD THIS IS LUIGI'S DRESSING ROOM...NO ONE HERE YET... I CHECKED BACK WITH THE HOTEL AND NEITHER HE NOR CARLOS RETURNED... THEY SHOULD BE... OH, OH... HERE COMES SOMEONE!
IT WILL BE A KNOCK-OUT, CARLOS!
YOU, I HOPE, WILL DO THE KNOCKING-OUT... I'M WORRIED...
THAT THREAT NOTE... I DON'T LIKE IT, LUIGI!
NEITHER DO I... IT WOULD BE HEALTHIER, RAMONO, IF YOU **DIDN'T** FIGHT!
SO! **YOU'RE** THE ONE WHO SENT ME THE **"WHITE DEATH"** LETTER... BUT, YOU CANNOT FRIGHTEN ME!
NOW, WHO ARE YOU? WHO'S PAYING YOU TO HAVE ME DROP THE FIGHT?
LOOK, BIG BOY...I'M **CHIP CHANCE**, PRIVATE DETECTIVE, AND MY ONLY INTEREST IS TO PROTECT YOU!
IN THAT CASE I'M WITH YOU... I'VE BEEN TRYING TO TELL LUIGI NOT TO FIGHT TONIGHT, EVEN THOUGH I'M HIS TRAINER... HE DOESN'T NEED THE MONEY FROM BOXING... HE'S WEALTHY!
I AM GOING TO FIGHT!! HOW WILL IT LOOK TO MY PUBLIC OTHERWISE? IT'S MY FIRST BOUT HERE IN 5 YEARS, AND... MR. CHANCE, DID MY FIANCEE TINA TUCKER HIRE YOU?
SHE DID! AND YOU'RE LUCKY TO HAVE A BEAUTIFUL DISH LIKE THAT WORRYING ABOUT YOU... DO YOU HAVE ANY ENEMIES, RAMONO? WHAT ABOUT THE MAN YOU'RE GOING TO FIGHT TONIGHT, PUNCHER MARTIN?
YOU THINK HE MIGHT HAVE? I'VE BEEN THINKING THAT, TOO.. LUIGI HAS NO OTHER ENEMIES...
4
AND NOBODY IS GOING TO FRIGHTEN ME... **NO MATTER! I'M GOING TO FIGHT TONIGHT. AND THAT IS THAT!**
IT'S **YOUR** FUNERAL, HERCULES...
CAN'T WORK ON HIM... HE'S TOO DETERMINED... I'LL TRY ANOTHER TACK... PUNCHER MARTIN!

C'MON, PETE! A BREATH O'AIR'LL JUST SET ME UP!
IT BETTER! FROM WHERE I STAND THINGS DON'T LOOK SO HOT!
PUNCHER AND HIS TRAINER GOING OUT! THAT GIVES ME A CHANCE TO LOOK AROUND IN HIS DRESSING ROOM...
PUNCHER MUST'VE WRITTEN THIS LITTLE OPUS... I FOUND IT IN HIS COAT POCKET. QUITE A LADIES' MAN, I SEE!
Call Mona, brake a date, call Snuggles maik a date.
HANDWRITING DOESN'T MATCH THE SIGNATURE... AND STATIONERY'S DIFFERENT! BUT THOSE X'ED OUT LETTERS ON THE THREAT NOTE MIGHT MEAN THE WRITER HAD SPELLING DIFFICULTIES... STILL, THERE'S NOT ENOUGH TO GO ON... I'LL KEEP SEARCH--- WHAT'S THAT?
CREAK!
NO ONE HERE... COULD'VE BEEN A MOUSE... OR WAS IT A RAT? ANOTHER DOOR LEADING OUT TO THE CORRIDOR... SOMEONE COULD HAVE---
AND DON'T FORGET, PUNCHER... YER RIGHT. LEAD WITH YER RIGHT...
O.K.! O.K.! YOU NAG WORSE'N MY MOTHER-IN-LAW, IF I HAD ONE!
THEY'RE COMING BACK! THAT'S THE END OF MY SEARCH... AN' NEARLY TIME FOR THE FIGHT... NOTHING TO DO NOW BUT GO OUT FRONT AND WATCH... ANYTHING CAN HAPPEN!
MOMENTS LATER, CHIP MAKES HIS WAY THROUGH THE SURGING CROWD TO A RINGSIDE SEAT...
I WAS GIVING YOU UP... ANY SUCCESS, CHIP? I HAVEN'T HEARD ANY RUMOR ABOUT THE FIGHT BEING CALLED OFF...
COULDN'T TALK LUIGI OUT OF IT, MEANING I HAVEN'T EARNED ANY PART OF THE 500 YET... AND SPEAKING OF MISS TUCKER'S MONEY, WHAT DID YOU FIND OUT ABOUT HER?

TINA'S BEEN A PROFESSIONAL SINGER FOR THE PAST 3 YEARS, AND SUCCESSFUL AT IT... AND A SOCIALITE BACKGROUND... WELL EDUCATED, TOO... AND A FAST WORKER... HER ENGAGEMENT WAS ANNOUNCED JUST A WEEK AFTER SHE MET LUIGI... THEY PLAN TO BE MARRIED SOON!
IF SHE'S NOT A WIDOW BEFORE SHE'S A---HOLD EVERYTHING, BUNNY, THE FIGHTERS ARE IN!
INTRO-DUCIN'...! IN THIS CORNER, PUN-CHER---
SOON-ROUND 1-AND THE GARDEN ECHOES WITH THE ROAR OF THE CROWD...
LUIGI'S SURE GOING STRONG!
SOCK HIM BACK, PUNCHER!
COME ON... LUIGI!
LUIGI'S HAD EVERY ROUND SO FAR... CHIP-IT LOOKS LIKE HE'S GOING TO WIN!
DON'T COUNT YOUR CHICKENS, CHICKEN... THIS IS ONLY ROUND 4... NEVER CAN TELL IN A PRIZE FIGHT--- HO! WHAT'S THAT?
THAT'S IT, PUNCHER!
YOU'RE LANDING NOW, BOY!
PUNCHER CONTINUES TO LAND BLOW AFTER BLOW WITH LUIGI WEAKENING STEADILY... AND BY THE 6TH ROUND...
LUIGI CAN HARDLY STAND UP---
YES... HE'S GETTING A BAD BEATING...
THE KNOCK-OUT, PUNCHER!.... NOW'S THE TIME! GIVE IT TO HIM!
BUT SUDDENLY---A MOMENT LATER... THE STAGGERING LUIGI TURNS THE TIDE.....
WHAT THE---!
WELL, STRIKE ME BLUE... THAT'S STRANGE! DARNED STRANGE!

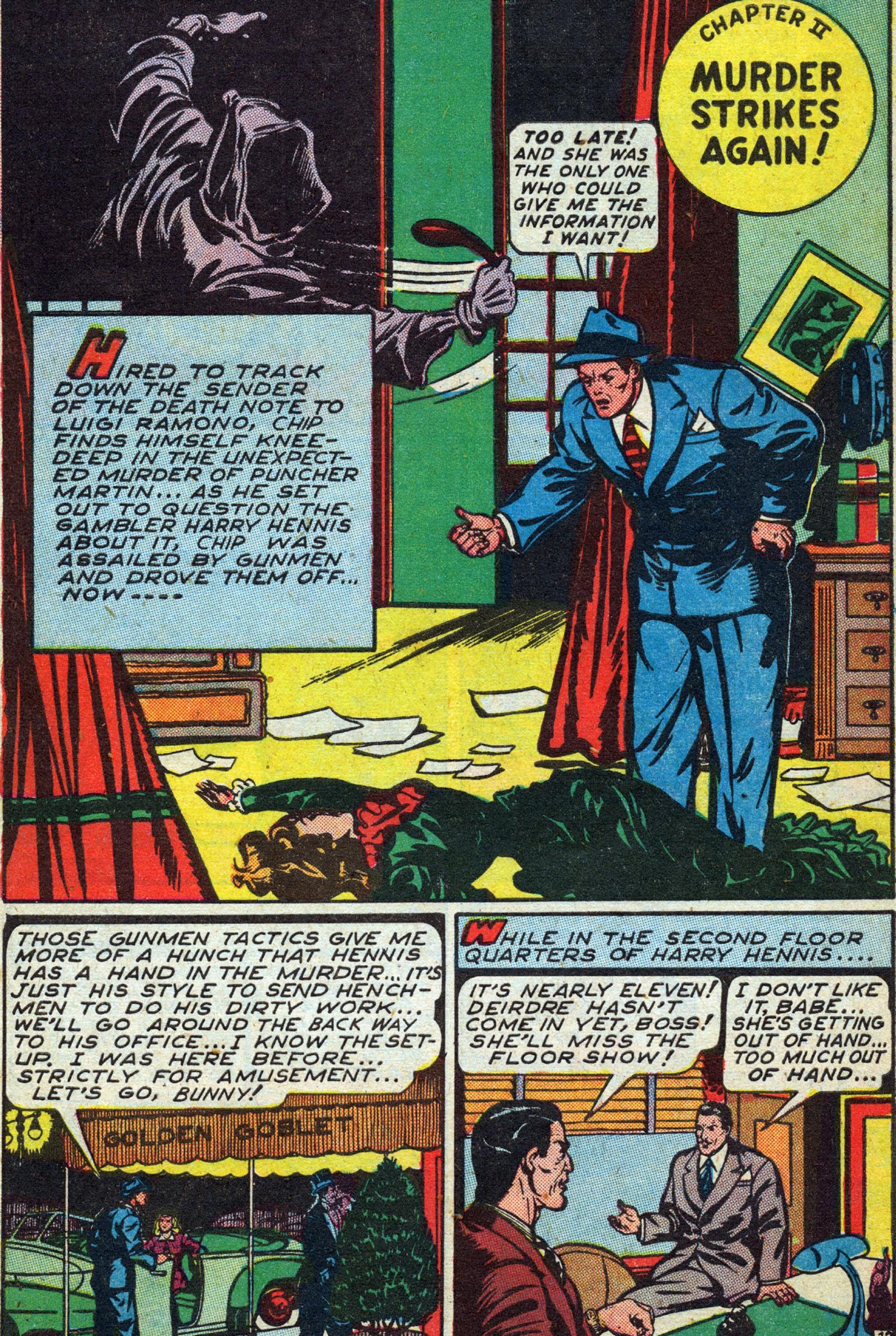
7-8-9-10... THE WINNAH... LUIGI RAMONO!
LUIGI'S BLOW DIDN'T HAVE ENOUGH FORCE TO KNOCK PUNCHER OUT! AND HE'S STILL OUT... UNCONSCIOUS HMM... THEY'RE CARRYING HIM OFF... THERE'S SOMETHING DEFINITELY OUT OF LINE! WE'RE GOING BACK TO PUNCHER'S DRESSING ROOM!
WHAT A CRUSH! I THOUGHT WE'D NEVER GET THIS FAR!
HOLD IT, BUNNY... THAT MAN IN THE GREY SUIT GIVES ME IDEAS! HE'S HARRY HENNIS, BIG TIME GAMBLER, SO DON'T TELL ME HE HASN'T A STAKE IN THIS SOMEWHERE... HMMM.....
BUNNY, YOU KNOW THAT SPORTING GOODS STORE NEXT DOOR? IT'S A FRONT FOR A BETTING SYNDICATE! I WANT YOU TO GO IN THERE, USE YOUR EYES AND EARS, AND LET ME KNOW IF HENNIS OR HIS PAL CASH IN.... OH... TO MAKE YOUR VISIT LOGICAL, HERE'S A TICKET FOR YOU TO CASH IN! YES, I PLACED A BET ON LUIGI JUST BEFORE THE FIGHT BEGAN... KEEP THE CHANGE, SUGAR!
$10! NOW COULDN'T YOU HAVE BET $100?
SOON AFTER... IN PUNCHER'S DRESSING ROOM...
PUNCHER! FOR THE LOVA--- SNAP OUT OF IT, BOY! WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH HIM, DOC?
NOTHING WILL EVER BOTHER HIM AGAIN... YOUR BOY'S DEAD!
LET ME SEE HIM!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY PUSHING YOUR WAY IN HERE?
I'M A DETECTIVE... MMM, PUPILS ENLARGED, DISTORTED... SLIGHT GREENISH TINGE TO COMPLEXION.... THAT'S THE ANSWER! DOC, YOU DIDN'T LOOK HARD ENOUGH... HE'S BEEN POISONED!
POISONED!!! ARE YOU KIDDING? WHO'D POISON HIM?... HOW?
A MOMENT'S THOUGHT... A MEMORY OF A CREAKING SOUND... AND CHIP EXAMINES THE WATER BUCKET....
HOW? PUNCHER DRANK OUT OF THIS BETWEEN ROUNDS, DIDN'T HE? MMM, WHITE SEGMENTS AT THE BOTTOM... STRYCHNINE! THAT'S HOW!
SO PUNCHER GOT A "WHITE DEATH"!
STRYCHNINE!
I'LL CALL THE POLICE!

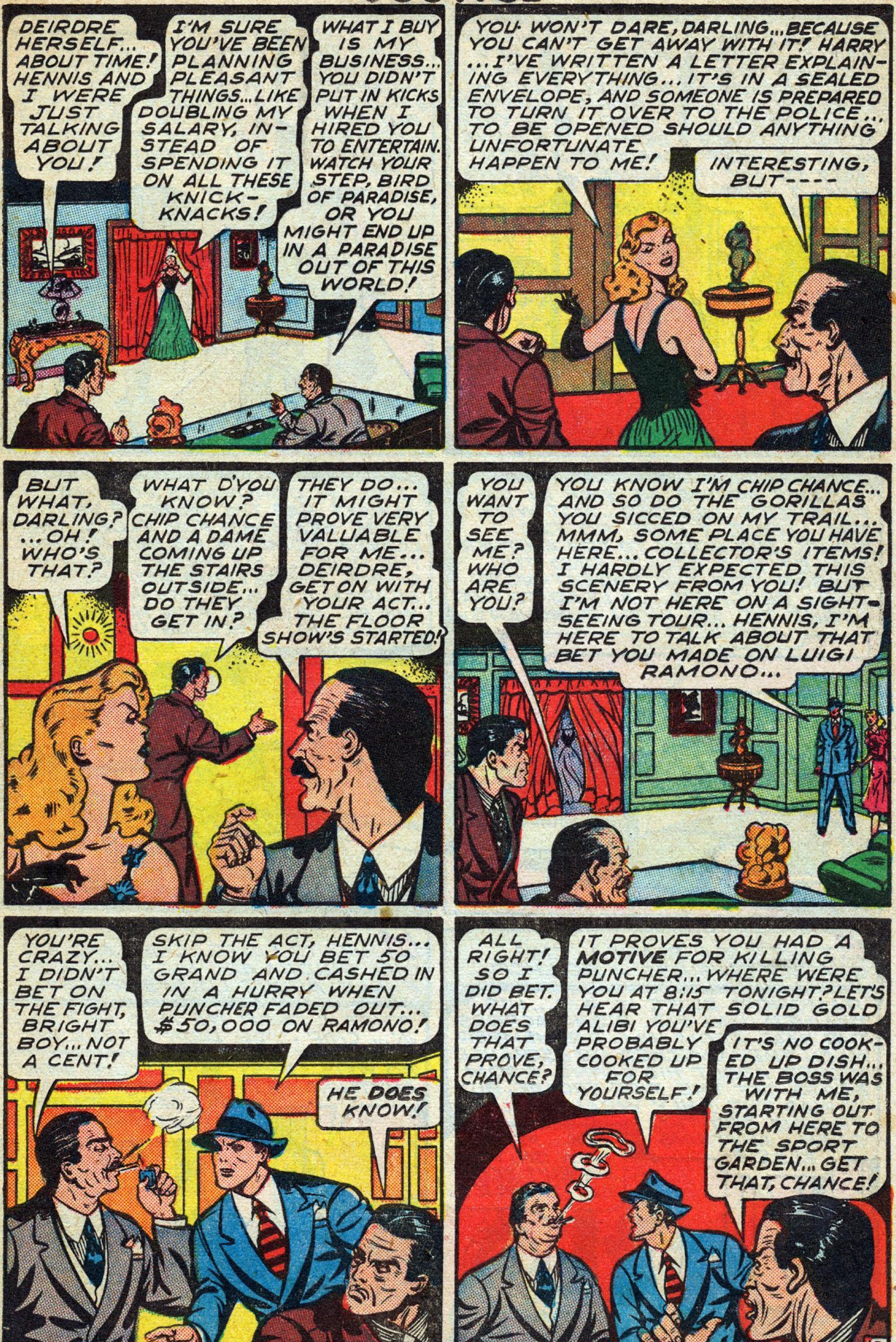
SOON AFTER...
THERE I WAS, CASEY, WINNING IN A GIN RUMMY GAME THE FIRST TIME IN A MONTH... AND I GET CALLED ON A MURDER... SAY, THAT VOICE IN THERE SOUNDS FAMILIAR!
WHEN WAS THIS WATER BUCKET FILLED?
I FILLED IT RIGHT AFTER PUNCHER AND I CAME IN AT 8:15, AND LEFT IT BEHIND THE CURTAIN. THEN WE AMBLED OUT FOR SOME AIR... YOU DON'T THINK I PUT IN THE STRYCH?
I'M PUNCHER'S TRAINER... I STAKED EVERYTHING ON MY BOY!
I DIDN'T SAY I SUSPECTED YOU, PETE... NOT YET, ANYWAY!
WELL, MAYBE I'M SUSPECTING HIM NOW! YOU, CHANCE, WHO TOLD YOU TO TAKE OVER THIS CASE?
WELL, WELL... SERGEANT DONOVAN... THE PRIDE OF HOMICIDE!
NO WISE CRACKS! FROM NOW ON I'M TAKIN' OVER... CASEY, BRING IN LUIGI RAMONO! I WANT TO ASK HIM SOME QUESTIONS!
O.K., SARGE!
NOW... WHAT'S THIS ABOUT THE WATER BUCKET? SPEAK UP, CHANCE... NOT THAT I WANT ANY ADVICE FROM YOU!
I UNDERSTAND, SARGE... THE STRYCHNINE WAS POSSIBLY PLACED IN THE BUCKET SHORTLY AFTER 8:15, WHEN PUNCHER AND PETE LEFT THE ROOM... IN FACT I'M SURE OF IT!
OH, YOU'RE SURE, HUH? HOW DO YOU KNOW?
EXCUSE ME, SERGEANT, BUT I CAN ANSWER THAT! I WAS WAITING OUTSIDE FOR A PAL OF MINE WHO HAD THE TICKETS FOR THE FIGHT, AND I SAW THIS FELLA GO IN HERE...
(GULP!)
SO YOU WERE HERE, CHANCE? MAYBE YOU KNOCKED OFF PUNCHER! WHAT ELSE WOULD YOU HAVE BEEN DOING IN HERE?
GUESS I'LL HAVE TO TELL HIM... OR HE'LL PLAGUE ME THE REST OF MY--- OH, OH... MORE COMPANY!
PUNCHER! ... I JUST HEARD... THEN--- THEN--- IT IS TRUE!
8

IS THAT..? OH, PUNCHER, PUNCHER, DARLING! WHO WOULD DO THIS TO YOU?
GET BACK! GET AWAY FROM THE CORPSE! AND WHO ARE YOU?
SHE'S MONA TEBBLE, ONLY I DON'T KNOW WHY THE GRIEF... SHE AND PUNCHER WENT TOGETHER, BUT HE DITCHED HER FOR A NEW TOMATO!
SHE SWORE TO GET EVEN... PUNCHER TOLD ME....
YOU LITTLE WEASEL... IF ANYONE KILLED HIM YOU DID... TELL THEM HOW MUCH MONEY YOU BORROWED FROM PUNCHER AND NEVER PAID BACK... YOU TWO HAD YOUR FIGHTS ALL RIGHT... AND NOT IN THE RING!
SO! A COUPLE OF MURDER MOTIVES! THINGS ARE PILING UP!
THE NEXT MOMENT—ANOTHER ENTRY INTO THE GAME OF "WHO DONE IT?"
GOT HIM, SARGE!
IT'S ABSURD! WHAT REASON WOULD LUIGI HAVE TO MURDER PUNCHER, WHEN HE HIMSELF WAS THREATENED WITH DEATH?
THAT'S TRUE, DONOVAN... I WAS HIRED TO FIND OUT WHO SENT LUIGI A THREAT NOTE!
THAT'S WHY I WAS IN THIS ROOM! I WAS LOOKING FOR HANDWRITING SPECIMENS TO COMPARE WITH THIS NOTE---
IT'S GOT NOTHING TO DO WITH PUNCHER'S MURDER! SOME CRANK COULD'VE SENT IT... I'M TAKING YOU ALL DOWN TO HEADQUARTERS FOR FURTHER QUESTIONING, AND BY THE SAINTS, I'LL GET THE TRUTH!
BUT I'M INNOCENT!
STOP SHOVING ME!
THAT DON'T LET YOU OUT, CHANCE... LOOKING FOR HANDWRITING SPECIMENS, HUH? HOW DO I KNOW THAT'S THE TRUTH? YOU'RE COMING DOWN TO THE STATION, TOO!
ALL RIGHT, DONOVAN... I HAD A MOTIVE. I BET $10 ON LUIGI... TO INSURE HIS WINNING AND SAVE MY $10, I MURDERED PUNCHER... USE YOUR HEAD, SARGE... LET ME GO, AND I'LL HAVE THIS CASE CRACKED IN 24 HOURS! I'VE A FEW THINGS IN MIND...
YEH?... WELL... ALL RIGHT. GO ON YOUR WILD-GOOSE CHASE... OHHH... WHY AM I SO GOOD TO YOU??
9

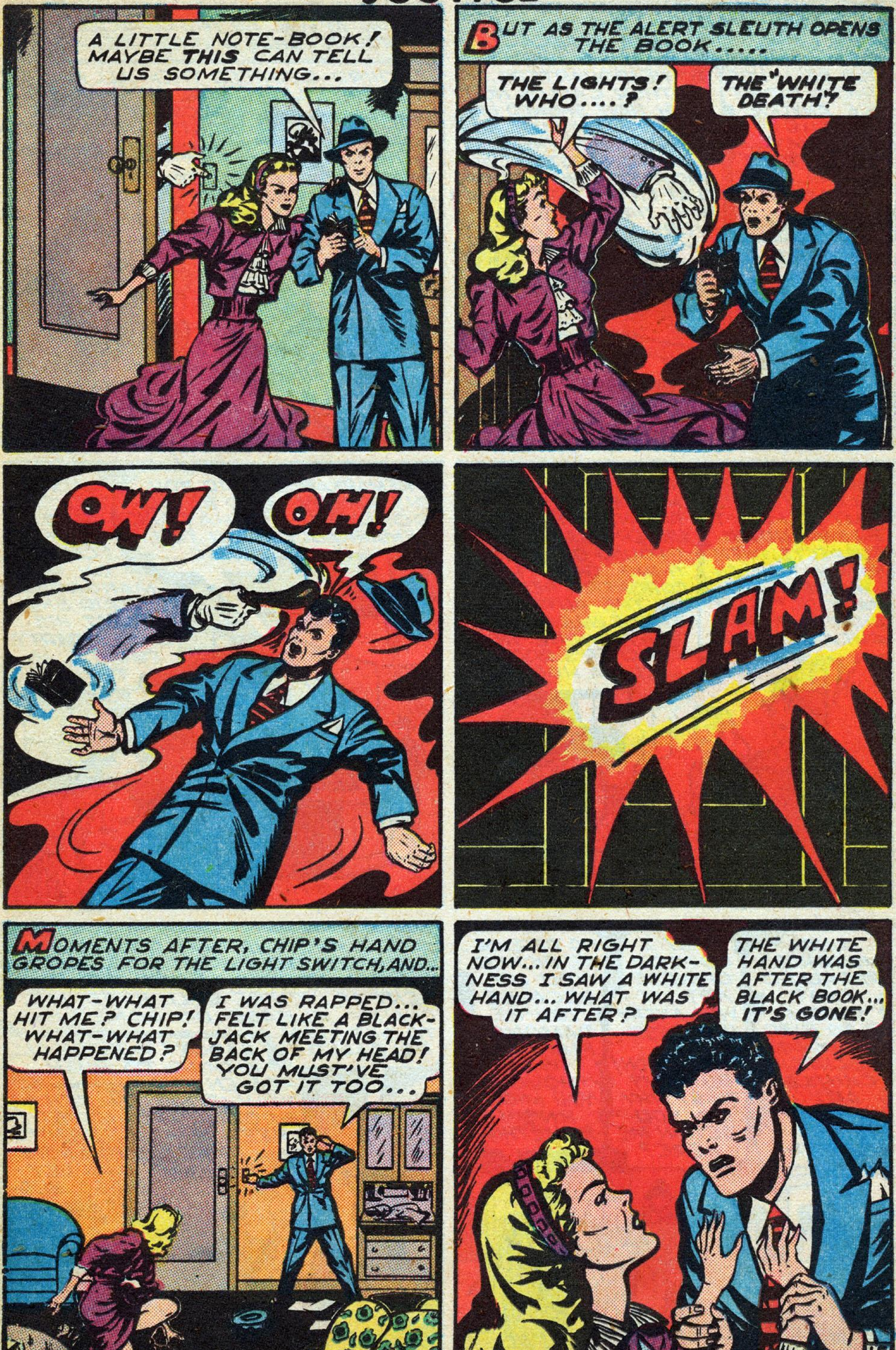
SHORT MINUTES LATER---OUTSIDE THE GARDEN...
CHIP, THE NEWS IS GOING AROUND THAT PUNCHER WAS MURDERED... I HEARD IT IN THE STORE!
WHAT ELSE DID YOU HEAR THERE? WAIT! DON'T TELL ME YET... LET'S GET IN THE CAR AND GET MOVING!
O.K., BUNNY! WHAT GAVE?
NOTHING... I SAW HENNIS'S MAN NEAR THE PAY-OFF TABLE. BUT AS I WAS EDGING INTO EARSHOT, SOME GORILLA STEPPED IN FRONT OF ME, AND WHEN I MANEUVERED INTO POSITION AGAIN, HENNIS'S MAN WAS GONE... I DID SEE HIM MAKE A GESTURE... IF IT MEANS ANYTHING---
HE HELD UP A FIST, LIKE THIS, CHIP.. WHY DO YOU KEEP MOVING THAT MIRROR? AND WHY DID YOU WHISK ME INTO THE CAR LIKE A 7-ALARM FIRE? WHERE ARE WE GOING?
TO HENNIS'S NIGHT CLUB, "THE GOLDEN GOBLET," TO ASK HIM SOME QUESTIONS... AS FOR THE MIRROR---
DON'T LOOK BACK, BUT A CAR'S BEEN TAILING US SINCE WE LEFT THE GARDEN... I HAD A HUNCH I WAS BEING SHADOWED... AFTER SOMEONE REPORTED SEEING ME GO INTO PUNCHER'S DRESSING ROOM BEFORE THE FIGHT... IT'S TIME FOR A SHOW-DOWN... WE'RE GETTING OUT AND WALKING INTO THAT BUILDING AS IF WE SUSPECTED NOTHING!
SHORTLY AFTER, A BLACK CAR GLIDES TO THE CURB, AND A MENACING DUO ALIGHTS! THEN...
THEY WENT IN HERE... BUT EASY, KOOPIE!
HE SHOULD BE TAKEN CARE OF NOW... WHERE'D HE GO?
SUDDENLY... FROM BEHIND THE DOOR...
RIGHT HERE, KOOPIE... DROP THE ARTILLERY!

AND YOU PULLED A BLACK-JACK! TSK, TSK... YOU BIRDS COME WELL EQUIPPED... GET KOOPIE'S GUN, BUNNY!
UP ON YOUR FEET! YOU'VE A LOT OF TALKING TO DO! WHO ARE YOU WORKING FOR?
CHIP! BEHIND YOU!
AS THE HARD-HITTING SLEUTH SWINGS AROUND SWIFTLY...
DOWN, BUNNY! QUICK!
THE BULLET BARRAGE CEASES SHORTLY, BUT...
THEY'RE GETTING AWAY... I'VE GOT TO....
TOO LATE... MY CAR COULDN'T OVERTAKE THEM NOW... WHAT HAPPENED TO THE GUN YOU HAD, BUNNY? WHY DIDN'T YOU USE IT?
OH, CHIP, I COULDN'T... I WOULDN'T DARE PULL THE TRIGGER, BECAUSE I DON'T KNOW HOW TO AIM!
IN THE FAST-MOVING CRIMINAL CAR....
OH! MY MOUTH! THAT CHANCE PACKS A TOUGH WALLOP! HE SHOULD'VE BEEN TAKEN CARE OF!
MIGHT BE JUST AS WELL THIS WAY... THE BOSS DIDN'T GIVE HIS ORDERS YET.., WHEN HE DOES, THERE WON'T BE A SLIP-UP!
11


CHAPTER II
MURDER STRIKES AGAIN!
TOO LATE! AND SHE WAS THE ONLY ONE WHO COULD GIVE ME THE INFORMATION I WANT!
HIRED TO TRACK DOWN THE SENDER OF THE DEATH NOTE TO LUIGI RAMONO, CHIP FINDS HIMSELF KNEE-DEEP IN THE UNEXPECTED MURDER OF PUNCHER MARTIN... AS HE SET OUT TO QUESTION THE GAMBLER HARRY HENNIS ABOUT IT, CHIP WAS ASSAILED BY GUNMEN AND DROVE THEM OFF... NOW ----
THOSE GUNMEN TACTICS GIVE ME MORE OF A HUNCH THAT HENNIS HAS A HAND IN THE MURDER... IT'S JUST HIS STYLE TO SEND HENCHMEN TO DO HIS DIRTY WORK... WE'LL GO AROUND THE BACK WAY TO HIS OFFICE... I KNOW THE SET-UP. I WAS HERE BEFORE... STRICTLY FOR AMUSEMENT... LET'S GO, BUNNY!
GOLDEN GOBLET
WHILE IN THE SECOND FLOOR QUARTERS OF HARRY HENNIS....
IT'S NEARLY ELEVEN! DEIRDRE HASN'T COME IN YET, BOSS! SHE'LL MISS THE FLOOR SHOW!
I DON'T LIKE IT, BABE... SHE'S GETTING OUT OF HAND... TOO MUCH OUT OF HAND...


DEIRDRE HERSELF... ABOUT TIME! HENNIS AND I WERE JUST TALKING ABOUT YOU!
I'M SURE YOU'VE BEEN PLANNING PLEASANT THINGS... LIKE DOUBLING MY SALARY, INSTEAD OF SPENDING IT ON ALL THESE KNICK-KNACKS!
WHAT I BUY IS MY BUSINESS... YOU DIDN'T PUT IN KICKS WHEN I HIRED YOU TO ENTERTAIN. WATCH YOUR STEP, BIRD OF PARADISE, OR YOU MIGHT END UP IN A PARADISE OUT OF THIS WORLD!
YOU WON'T DARE, DARLING... BECAUSE YOU CAN'T GET AWAY WITH IT! HARRY ... I'VE WRITTEN A LETTER EXPLAINING EVERYTHING... IT'S IN A SEALED ENVELOPE, AND SOMEONE IS PREPARED TO TURN IT OVER TO THE POLICE... TO BE OPENED SHOULD ANYTHING UNFORTUNATE HAPPEN TO ME!
INTERESTING, BUT----
BUT WHAT, DARLING? ...OH! WHO'S THAT?
WHAT D'YOU KNOW? CHIP CHANCE AND A DAME COMING UP THE STAIRS OUTSIDE... DO THEY GET IN?
THEY DO... IT MIGHT PROVE VERY VALUABLE FOR ME... DEIRDRE, GET ON WITH YOUR ACT... THE FLOOR SHOW'S STARTED!
YOU WANT TO SEE ME? WHO ARE YOU?
YOU KNOW I'M CHIP CHANCE... AND SO DO THE GORILLAS YOU SICCED ON MY TRAIL... MMM, SOME PLACE YOU HAVE HERE... COLLECTOR'S ITEMS! I HARDLY EXPECTED THIS SCENERY FROM YOU! BUT I'M NOT HERE ON A SIGHT-SEEING TOUR... HENNIS, I'M HERE TO TALK ABOUT THAT BET YOU MADE ON LUIGI RAMONO...
YOU'RE CRAZY... I DIDN'T BET ON THE FIGHT, BRIGHT BOY... NOT A CENT!
SKIP THE ACT, HENNIS... I KNOW YOU BET 50 GRAND AND CASHED IN IN A HURRY WHEN PUNCHER FADED OUT... $50,000 ON RAMONO!
HE DOES KNOW!
ALL RIGHT! SO I DID BET. WHAT DOES THAT PROVE, CHANCE?
IT PROVES YOU HAD A MOTIVE FOR KILLING PUNCHER... WHERE WERE YOU AT 8:15 TONIGHT? LET'S HEAR THAT SOLID GOLD ALIBI YOU'VE PROBABLY COOKED UP FOR YOURSELF!
IT'S NO COOKED UP DISH... THE BOSS WAS WITH ME, STARTING OUT FROM HERE TO THE SPORT GARDEN... GET THAT, CHANCE!

AND GET THIS, CHANCE...I HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH PUNCHER'S MURDER...YOU'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO PROVE OTHERWISE, SO KEEP OUT OF MY WAY...I WARN YOU!
KEEP YOUR GUNMEN OUT OF MY WAY... I DON'T LIKE BEING SHADOWED... COME ON, BUNNY!
GUNMEN? HE'S CRAZY, AIN'T HE, BOSS? NONE OF OUR BOYS'VE BEEN TAGGING HIM!
WELL, WE FOUND OUT ONE THING... HENNIS'S $50,000 BET! BUT HOW DID YOU KNOW, CHIP?
YOU TOLD ME HENNIS'S MAN HELD UP A FIST AT THE BETTING TABLE... IN UNDERWORLD LINGO, 5 FINGERS ARE 5,000... A FIST 50 GRAND...THAT GAVE THE SHOW AWAY! BUT HENNIS IS RIGHT ABOUT ONE THING---
I CAN'T PROVE HE WAS IN ON PUNCHER'S MURDER... NOT WITH THE LITTLE I HAVE SO FAR... BUNNY, I'M GOING TO TRY ANOTHER ANGLE! IF I COULD FIND THE REASON FOR THE THREAT-NOTE LUIGI RECEIVED...A LEAD TO THAT MIGHT TIE UP WITH PUNCHER'S MURDER!
I KNOW DONOVAN'S ROUTINE...HE ALWAYS HAS THE MURDER VICTIM'S HOME SEARCHED FOR CLUES...THEN LEAVES SOME OF HIS MEN TO GUARD THE PLACE... SO THERE'S NO USE GOING THERE! OUR BEST BET'S TO SEARCH LUIGI'S ROOM... YES, WE'RE HEADED FOR HIS HOTEL... MMM, NO ONE'S ON OUR TAIL NOW!
THAT'S A RELIEF!
AT THE CASA BIANCA, CHIP QUICKLY CONSULTS A BELLHOP...
RAMONO'S SUITE IS 410... HIS TRAINER HAS 413, RIGHT ACROSS THE HALL FROM HIM... I REMEMBER WHEN THEY CHECKED IN! ESCHANGE KICKED ABOUT HIS LIVING ROOM BEING OFF THE FIRE-ESCAPE, BUT IT WAS THE ONLY VACANCY... UM, THANKS FER THE CASH...ANYTHING ELSE?
YES... FROM NOW ON, YOU HAVEN'T SEEN CHIP CHANCE!
MOMENTS LATER, CHIP AND HIS GIRL FRIDAY ARE MOVING CAREFULLY ABOUT LUIGI'S ROOM...
WHAT A SNAP WE HAD GETTING IN... CHIP, YOU DIDN'T TELL ME YOU PICK LOCKS SO WELL... FIND ANYTHING YET?
NO! LUIGI DIDN'T CARRY ON ANY CORRESPONDENCE... BUT WHAT'S THIS?

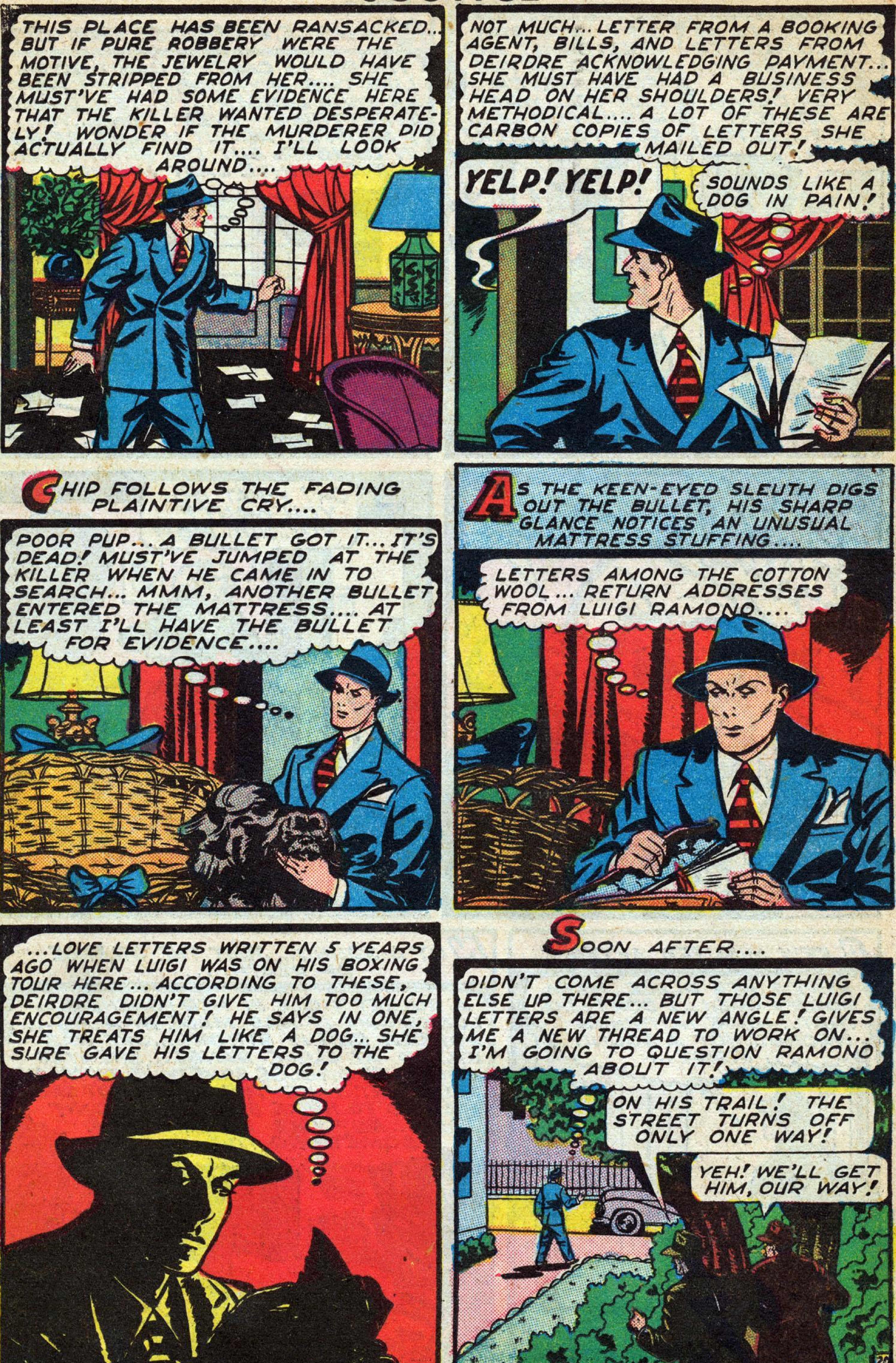

A LITTLE NOTE-BOOK! MAYBE THIS CAN TELL US SOMETHING...
BUT AS THE ALERT SLEUTH OPENS THE BOOK.....
THE LIGHTS! WHO....?
THE "WHITE DEATH"
OW!
OH!
SLAM!
MOMENTS AFTER, CHIP'S HAND GROPES FOR THE LIGHT SWITCH, AND...
WHAT-WHAT HIT ME? CHIP! WHAT-WHAT HAPPENED?
I WAS RAPPED... FELT LIKE A BLACK-JACK MEETING THE BACK OF MY HEAD! YOU MUST'VE GOT IT TOO...
I'M ALL RIGHT NOW... IN THE DARKNESS I SAW A WHITE HAND... WHAT WAS IT AFTER?
THE WHITE HAND WAS AFTER THE BLACK BOOK... IT'S GONE!

NOT LONG AFTER... THE PUZZLED PAIR LEAVES THE CASA BIANCA....
OUR BELL-HOP FRIEND DIDN'T SEE ANYONE IN THE HALLWAY... WE HAVEN'T A CLUE... NOW WHAT, CHIP?
TO HEADQUARTERS... NEITHER CARLOS NOR LUIGI HAVE SHOWED UP, SO DONOVAN MUST BE STILL HOLDING THEM. I WANT TO QUESTION LUIGI ABOUT THE CONTENTS OF THAT LITTLE BOOK... SOMETHING THERE MUST BE VERY IMPORTANT!
CASA BIANCA
SOON AFTER... AS THE CONSCIENTIOUS DONOVAN TAKES A BRIEF RESPITE...
I THIRD-DEGREED THEM ALL UNDER THE WHITE LIGHT... NONE OF 'EM BROKE... BUT ONE OF THEM'S GUILTY... WHICH ONE??
BUTTON-BUTTON-WHO'S GOT THE BUTTON? ... STILL PLAYING THAT OLD GAME, DONOVAN?
TSK, TSK... WHEN WILL YOU LEARN THAT YOU CAN'T BREAK DOWN SUSPECTS, WITH NOTHING TO GO ON ...WHERE IS THE PACK OF THEM? DIDN'T YOU FIND OUT ANYTHING?
DON'T GET SMART, CHANCE... THEY'RE IN THE NEXT ROOM, UNDER GUARD... SURE I FOUND OUT SOMETHING... GOT THE CORONER'S REPORT ON THE AUTOPSY... THERE WAS ENOUGH STRYCHNINE IN PUNCHER'S BODY TO KILL A HORSE!
A REMARKABLE DISCOVERY, DONOVAN... REMARKABLE!
DID YOU DO BETTER? WHAT ARE YOU..? OH... MAC...
MISS TUCKER'S ALIBI CHECKS... I CALLED ON MR. MANGROSS... HE SAID SHE WAS AT HIS DINNER PARTY FROM 6:30 TO 10...
AND MANGROSS RECALLED THAT FROM 8 TO 8:30 HE WAS DISCUSSING CHINESE ART WITH MISS TUCKER!
YES! I DOTE ON CHINESE ART... IT WAS A VERY INTERESTING DISCUSSION! BUT WHY THIS? WHY DO YOU DETAIN ME HERE?
NO OFFENSE... WE PICKED YOU UP BECAUSE YOU'RE RAMONO'S FIANCÉE... WE THOUGHT YOU MIGHT KNOW SOMETHING...
ALL I KNOW IS THAT POOR LUIGI RECEIVED THE THREAT-NOTE... AND MR. CHANCE WAS HIRED TO FIND OUT WHO SENT IT... YOU'RE STILL HIRED, MR. CHANCE... PLEASE DO SOMETHING TO GET LUIGI RELEASED!
SARGE! THEY'RE ALL KICKING TO HIGH HEAVEN THAT YOU'VE NO GROUNDS TO KEEP 'EM HERE!
YEH? MAYBE I HAVEN'T, FOR NOW... O.K., LET 'EM GO... BUT--

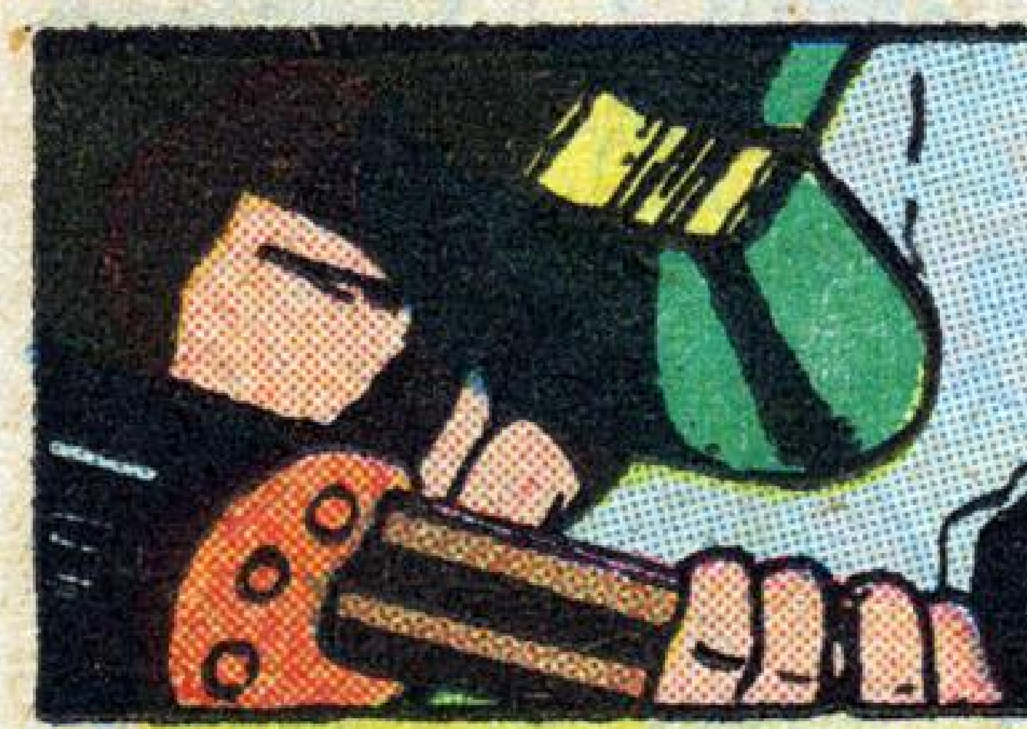
LUIGI! YOU'RE FREE!
ANGEL! LET US GET OUT OF HERE!
WAIT! BEFORE ANY OF YOU LEAVE... REMEMBER! THIS DON'T MEAN YOU'RE SCOTT FREE... NONE OF YOU CAN LEAVE THE CITY... DON'T FORGET THAT... AND YOU CAN BE CALLED BACK FOR QUESTIONING ANY TIME!
AS THE RELEASED QUARTET LEAVES.
BEFORE I GO, HERE'S A HOT TIP FOR YOU... HARRY HENNIS BET 50 GRAND ON LUIGI! IF HENNIS THOUGHT AT THE LAST MINUTE THAT LUIGI WOULD LOSE THE FIGHT, HE WOULDN'T HESITATE TO RUB OUT PUNCHER TO PROTECT HIS MONEY... WHY DON'T YOU AND YOUR BOYS GIVE THAT GAMBLER A GOING-OVER?
I DON'T BUY THAT, CHANCE! NOT WITHOUT MORE DEFINITE EVIDENCE... HENNIS WOULDN'T STOOP TO MURDER, TO GAIN HIS PURPOSE!
HE'D STOOP TO ANYTHING... BUT I CATCH... HENNIS HAS TOO MANY POLITICAL CONNECTIONS, SO YOU DON'T WANT TO HURT HIS TENDER FEELINGS, UNLESS IT'S IN BLACK AND WHITE! WIPE THE FOAM OFF YOUR MOUTH, SARGE... COME ON, BUNNY... WE'VE THINGS TO DO!
REWARD
TAXI!
LUIGI! YOU OWN--- YOU DID OWN A LITTLE BLACK BOOK! DON'T ASK ME HOW OR WHY... BUT IT'S BEEN STOLEN! WHAT WAS IN IT?
NOTHING OF IMPORTANCE TO ANYONE ELSE... I KEPT A RECORD OF MY FIGHTS... WHO I FOUGHT... WHEN... THE KNOCKOUT ROUND! NOTHING IN THERE THAT COULDN'T BE FOUND IN BACK COPIES OF ANY SPORT NEWS... I CAN'T UNDERSTAND.
WOULD YOU JOIN US IN A DRINK, CHANCE?
NO THANKS! I'M GOING RIGHT ON HOME...
...AND TRY TO FIGURE THINGS OUT!
YOU'RE GOING RIGHT ON HOME TOO, LUIGI! NO DRINKS! WE'LL DROP TINA OFF... AND YOU NEED SLEEP!
TAXI
(YAWN-YAWN!) OOPS... I'M NOT TIRED, NOT A BIT... WHERE TO NOW, CHIP?
HOME FOR YOU! IT'S PAST MIDNIGHT, AND, LITTLE GIRL, YOU'VE HAD A BUSY DAY... AND FROM THE LOOKS OF THIS CASE, SUGAR, TOMORROW'S NOT GOING TO BE QUIET EITHER! I'VE A HUNCH THAT SOMETHING BIG WILL EXPLODE!

HALF HOUR LATER... CHIP TRUDGES UP TO HIS 3RD FLOOR APARTMENT...
(YAWN-YAWN)... NOW I'VE GOT IT, TOO... LET'S SEE... BLACK BOOK, "WHITE DEATH," HENNIS... NOTHING FITS... SOMETHING'S LEFT OUT THAT WOULD PULL THOSE LOOSE THREADS TOGETHER INTO A PERFECT MURDER PATTERN... .. HAVE TO FIND THAT LINK... THAT BLACK BOOK SOUNDS INNOCENT ENOUGH, YET THERE MUST BE SOMETHING IN IT... I'LL PHONE BART BAXTER, THE SPORTS REPORTER... A GOOD FRIEND OF MINE...
GLAD I FOUND YOU IN, BART... LOOK, DO ME A FAVOR... FROM WHAT I KNOW ABOUT LUIGI RAMONO, HE WAS HERE IN THE STATES ON A BOXING TOUR 5 YEARS AGO... FIND OUT WHAT YOU CAN ABOUT THAT TOUR, AND ANYTHING ELSE YOU CAN DIG UP...
I CAN SMELL IT FROM HERE... YOU'RE ON THE PUNCHER MARTIN CASE... I'LL PITCH IN, CHIP!
THE NEXT MORNING...
WELL, WELL, BUNNY, ON THE JOB BRIGHT AND EARLY... REMIND ME TO GIVE YOU A RAISE..., ANY NEWS?
BART BAXTER PHONED IN SOME INFORMATION... TIDBITS ABOUT LUIGI. I WROTE THEM DOWN AND AM TYPING THEM OUT! HERE---
LET'S SEE... LUIGI WAS HERE FOR 6 MONTHS 5 YEARS AGO, FOUGHT 4 MAJOR BOUTS, TWO IN NEW YORK, ONE APIECE IN CHICAGO AND (MUMBLE)(MUMBLE)--"NAMES OF OPPONENTS"... (MUMBLE-MUMBLE) ..."THEN RETURNED TO SOUTH AMERICA, WHERE HE WAS ACTIVE IN THE RING UP TO A YEAR AGO... RETIRED THEN, FOR A REST... UNTIL RECENTLY---"
---"PUBLICITY INTERVIEWS HE GAVE OUT... FAVORITE MOVIE STAR, HEDY LAMARR... FAVORITE DRINK, SCOTCH... BUT DOESN'T DRINK BECAUSE OF HIS RIGID TRAINING... LIKES STRIPED TIES, BEETHOVEN..." HORSERADISH... ALL THE USUAL MUSH GIVEN OUT IN INTERVIEWS!
NOTHING THERE TO HELP YOU... I WONDER WHAT YOUR NEXT MOVE'S GOING TO--- OH, THE PHONE...
WHO? DEIRDRE DALE?
YES, I'M AN ENTERTAINER AT THE "GOLDEN GOBLET"! I MUST SEE CHIP CHANCE AT ONCE... I'VE SOMETHING OF GREAT IMPORTANCE TO TELL HIM!

SHE WANTS US TO COME OVER RIGHT AWAY... 203 EAST RIVER DRIVE, APARTMENT 602... LET'S GO!
US?... YOU STAY HERE, BUNNY, AND HOLD DOWN THE FORT... NEVER CAN TELL WHAT MIGHT POP UP... SEE YOU LATER!
MEANWHILE, AT DEIRDRE'S APARTMENT...
THE DIE IS CAST... I CAN'T GO ON LIKE THIS ANYMORE... I CAN'T WAIT AN HOUR LONGER... I'LL TELL CHANCE EVERYTHING--- EVERYTHING... YES, I SCOFFED ABOUT MY LIFE BEING IN DANGER, BUT I'M FRIGHTENED... EVER SINCE LAST NIGHT...
SLAM!
THE DOOR... WHO'S THAT? MR. CHANCE?
OH! WHAT DO YOU WANT? NO!.. NO!.. NO!!
A FEW MINUTES AFTER...
HERE'S HER PLACE... MMM, DOOR'S OPEN... I DON'T LIKE THAT... HOPE NOTHING'S WRONG... NOT A SOUND INSIDE...
602
NOT A SOUND... JUST THE SILENCE OF DEATH.....
A BULLET HOLE IN HER FOREHEAD... LOOKS LIKE IT WAS MADE BY A .38... POWDER BURNS STRONG... SHE WAS KILLED AT CLOSE RANGE... SHE WAS ABOUT TO DIVULGE SOMETHING IMPORTANT, ALL RIGHT... AND THE KILLER NOT ONLY WANTED TO MAKE SURE SHE DIDN'T TALK... BUT WAS LOOKING FOR SOMETHING TOO...


THIS PLACE HAS BEEN RANSACKED... BUT IF PURE ROBBERY WERE THE MOTIVE, THE JEWELRY WOULD HAVE BEEN STRIPPED FROM HER.... SHE MUST'VE HAD SOME EVIDENCE HERE THAT THE KILLER WANTED DESPERATELY! WONDER IF THE MURDERER DID ACTUALLY FIND IT.... I'LL LOOK AROUND....
NOT MUCH... LETTER FROM A BOOKING AGENT, BILLS, AND LETTERS FROM DEIRDRE ACKNOWLEDGING PAYMENT... SHE MUST HAVE HAD A BUSINESS HEAD ON HER SHOULDERS! VERY METHODICAL.... A LOT OF THESE ARE CARBON COPIES OF LETTERS SHE MAILED OUT!
YELP! YELP!
SOUNDS LIKE A DOG IN PAIN!
CHIP FOLLOWS THE FADING PLAINTIVE CRY....
POOR PUP... A BULLET GOT IT... IT'S DEAD! MUST'VE JUMPED AT THE KILLER WHEN HE CAME IN TO SEARCH... MMM, ANOTHER BULLET ENTERED THE MATTRESS.... AT LEAST I'LL HAVE THE BULLET FOR EVIDENCE....
AS THE KEEN-EYED SLEUTH DIGS OUT THE BULLET, HIS SHARP GLANCE NOTICES AN UNUSUAL MATTRESS STUFFING....
LETTERS AMONG THE COTTON WOOL... RETURN ADDRESSES FROM LUIGI RAMONO....
...LOVE LETTERS WRITTEN 5 YEARS AGO WHEN LUIGI WAS ON HIS BOXING TOUR HERE... ACCORDING TO THESE, DEIRDRE DIDN'T GIVE HIM TOO MUCH ENCOURAGEMENT! HE SAYS IN ONE, SHE TREATS HIM LIKE A DOG... SHE SURE GAVE HIS LETTERS TO THE DOG!
SOON AFTER....
DIDN'T COME ACROSS ANYTHING ELSE UP THERE... BUT THOSE LUIGI LETTERS ARE A NEW ANGLE! GIVES ME A NEW THREAD TO WORK ON... I'M GOING TO QUESTION RAMONO ABOUT IT!
ON HIS TRAIL! THE STREET TURNS OFF ONLY ONE WAY!
YEH! WE'LL GET HIM, OUR WAY!

DOWN A SHADOWY NARROW STREET, CHIP PILOTS HIS LITTLE CAR....
THAT CAR! THIS IS A ONE-WAY STREET... WHAT'S IT---?
A SECOND LATER.....
CRASH!
...AND A MENACING FIGURE EMERGES FROM THE THUG-DRIVEN VEHICLE...
OUT, CHANCE! I GOT YOU COVERED!
SUDDENLY...
HERE'S ONE COVER YOU DIDN'T COUNT ON.....
NOW TO GET HIS GUN... LUCKY I PASSED THAT BARGAIN BOOK STALL THIS MORNING AND WAS TEMPTED!
FAMOUS CRIME CASES
HE NEARLY BEAT US TO THE PUNCH! A SMART DICK!
NOT SMART ENOUGH...THIS PUTS HIM OUT COLD!
SOON...THE CRIME CAR SPINS THROUGH THE STREETS, BEARING THE UNCONSCIOUS PRISONER...
I FRISKED HIM...NOTHING ON HIM!
IF IT AIN'T ON HIM, HE KNOWS WHERE IT IS! HE'LL TALK OR ELSE!



THE EXTERMINATOR

THREE men got out of the black sedan parked down the street and dragged their bundles to the dilapidated apartment house next to the corner store. The big man cast a quick look around, and with a nod for the others to follow, ran up the steps and disappeared inside.

Once in the single room, they opened their bundles and pulled forth an assortment of tommy guns and sawed-off shotguns. Buck, the big one, said, "We got in okay; now we'll have to watch it. That gang is in the back room on the next floor. It's either them or us, and since we'll have the jump on 'em it *won't* be us! Their chief ought to be along in an hour. We get him first, then finish off the others."

A gang war was in progress. Upstairs the gang called the Red Band awaited their new leader whom they had never seen. Public Enemy number one on the police lists, the underworld knew him as The Exterminator. A good name for a crook who shot first and asked questions afterwards. Under his leadership the Red Band could take over the rackets of Buck's mob.

But there was a leak some place. The grapevine had passed the word around that the Exterminator was coming. Buck knew what it meant and laid his plans. After weeks of following the Red Band, he located their hideout and rented a room below them, and unseen had moved in to grab the Exterminator before he could contact his own men. Right now Buck was busy alternating between cleaning his gun and scratching his leg.

"The bugs are terrible in this place," he muttered. The others agreed, watching the oversize roaches scurrying up the walls. Every few minutes they would check their watches and glance about nervously.

In the hall the bell shrilled. The landlady opened the door with a hello, only to be answered by, "I'm the Exterminator. Where are they?"

"First door on the right," she replied. Buck's eyes widened. That was *their* room! The landlady . . . he had forgotten about her . . . she must be one of the gang. Suckers, that's what they were, they walked right into a trap! Instead of surprising the enemy, they were cornered like rats! The exterminator could wipe them all out with a blast of the tommy gun through the door.

They'd go down fighting, anyway! Each one of the three raised his weapon and leveled it at the door. Outside they heard feet pass the door, stop at the next one. Buck peered through a crack in the wall. He saw the figure standing there, a paper-wrapped gun under his arm . . . but the Exterminator was at the wrong door!

His mind raced . . . quick, this is your chance! Hurry before he realizes his mistake! Clutching his gun he tore open the door. "Get 'em up, quick!"

The bewhiskered gent at the door took one look at the wicked muzzle ready to spit death and dropped his bundle. It hit the floor with a metallic clunk as his hands went above his head. "B-but . . ."

Buck laughed grimly, "So you're the exterminator, hey? Well, right now I'm going to take over your title. Get in this room!" His knees shaking, the exterminator entered the room. Behind him a scream split the air as the landlady saw the gun in Buck's hand.

"They're going to kill the exterminator!" she screeched, then passed out cold. Buck's muscles tensed. If the Red Band heard that yell there'd be bullets flying all over the place. It had to be done quickly!

But the Red Band had heard. Spoonie Williams choked. "Hear that? The Exterminator's downstairs. Those mugs must have got wise and planted themselves in another room. Grab your guns. We'll have to blast our way out of here!"

Moving in unison the gunmen grabbed their weapons and raced for the door, covering every angle of approach, then began creeping down the stairs, their weapons ready to fire.

The exterminator wasn't doing so good. He had two guns aimed at his stomach. Buck's finger tightened on the trigger, but at that moment the stairs squeaked. Buck spun and let a blast rip through the wood paneling of the door. The exterminator saw his chance and threw himself forward, grappling with the other gunman. Before Buck could come to his aid a roar of gunfire boomed through the halls. The landlady awakened, emitted a terrified squawk and dashed into her room.

Somebody fell the length of the stairs and remained prostrate on the floor, but at the same time a random shot smacked into the walls, pierced it and bit into one of Buck's henchmen. The exterminator was so busy trying to wrench the gun out of the hands of his adversary that he didn't notice. In a desperate moment he found new strength and batted the gun away. But a fist caught him on the jaw and he stumbled into the washroom.

By now the gunfire was so thick bullets were pincushioning the walls and floors. The exterminator dropped to his knees. He had to find his weapon! He'd teach these mugs to kick him around like that! In the other room he was forgotten because he had no gun, but if he dared go back he'd be shot for certain. A stained glass window in the washroom faced the hall. Maybe he could make it!

Using his shoe he broke through the glass, pulling back in time to escape a hail of lead from the doorway aimed at the figures on the stairway above. His weapon was there all right, just where he dropped it when Buck got the drop on him . . . but it was out of reach. His fingers found two towels, then tied them together. Using this as an improvised noose he threw it out. Missed! Twice again he cast before the loop caught and held. Slowly . . . ever so slowly, he brought the weapon in through the hole in the window.

With the gunfight in full progress, whatever noise he made was well covered. Outside there were muffled shouts and groans as bullet after bullet found their mark. With quaking hands he unwrapped his strange weapon with which he had killed so often. An electric cord was rolled about the barrel, and he tore it free, then stuck it in the socket above him. On the street a siren was ripping the air. Voices shouted commands. He had to hurry before they all got away.

The exterminator faced Buck and his bunch through the doorway as they prepared themselves for flight. "Drop those guns," he yelled. The two in the door and the guy on the bed turned. Their eyes bulged, but before they could use their guns a stream of green vapor hit them full in the face. They choked, grabbed their eyes and screamed for him to stop!

Axes were chopping on the outside door now. The Red Band heard them and Spoonie Williams yelled a warning, but before it was carried out the exterminator stepped into the hall, raised his weapon and the charge of it hit the gang full in the face, just as the police dashed in!

When both gangs were in handcuffs, Buck, with eyes watering, pointed to the exterminator. "Say, ain't you going to take him in too? He's the Exterminator." All eyes went to the gent with the whiskers and the strange gun.

A cop said, "Yeah, you're right, Buck . . . only *not* the one you mean. The Chicago police nabbed the *real* Exterminator two days ago!"

Buck gaped. "Then—h-he's . . ."

"Uh-huh," the little guy said, "I'm a real exterminator! Came here to get some *bugs* . . . and it looks like I got a *lot* of 'em!"

THE END

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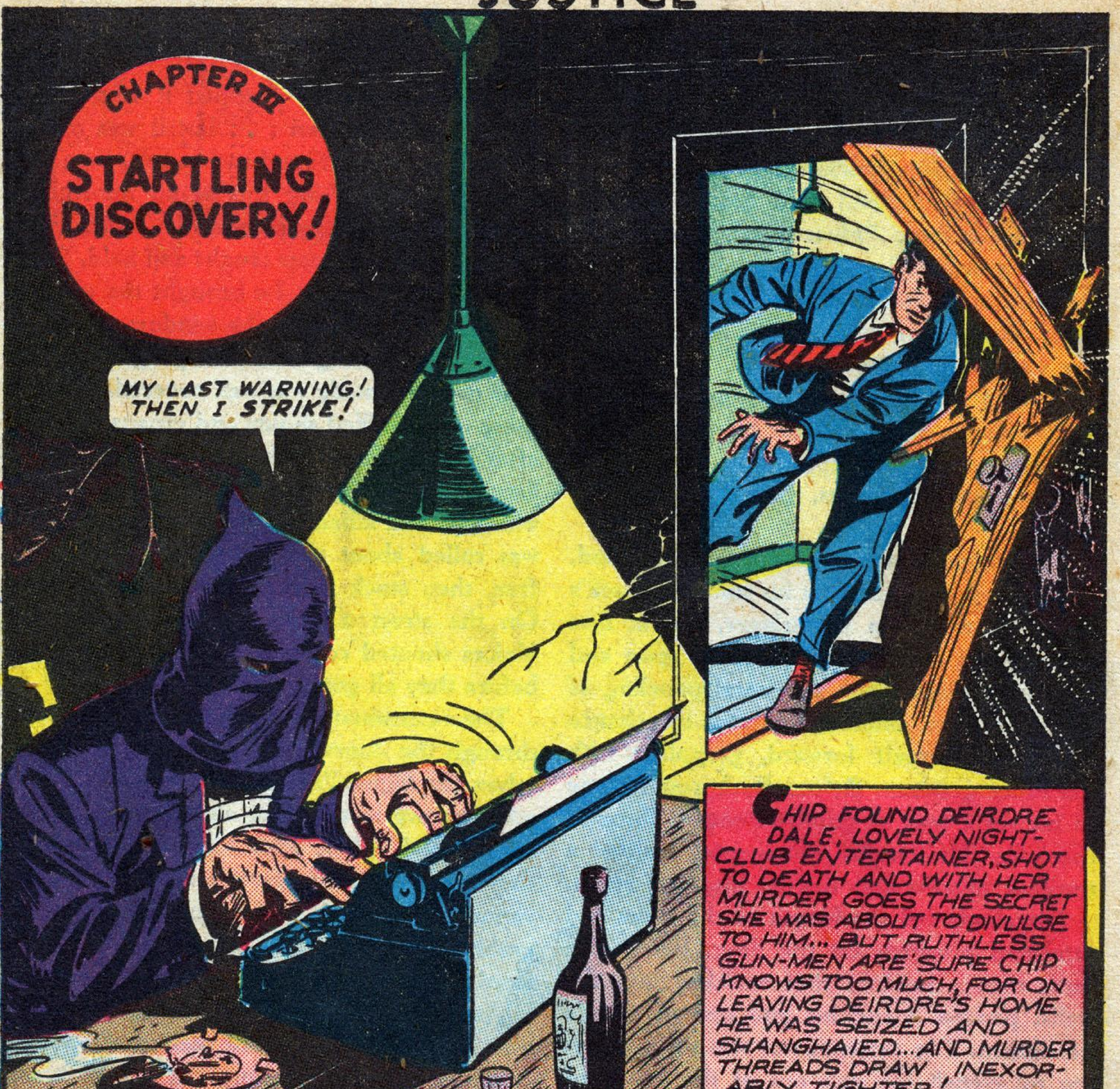
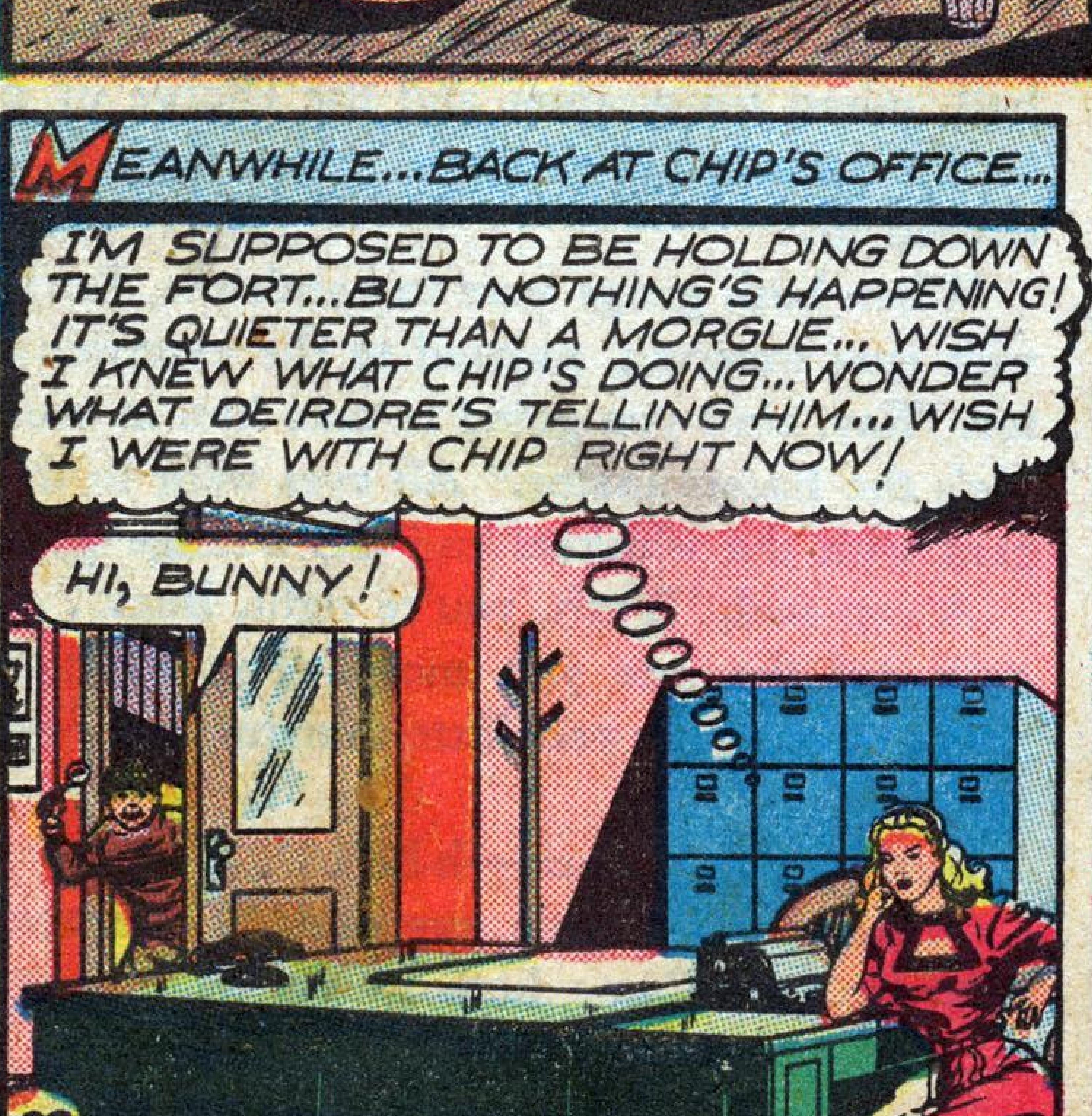
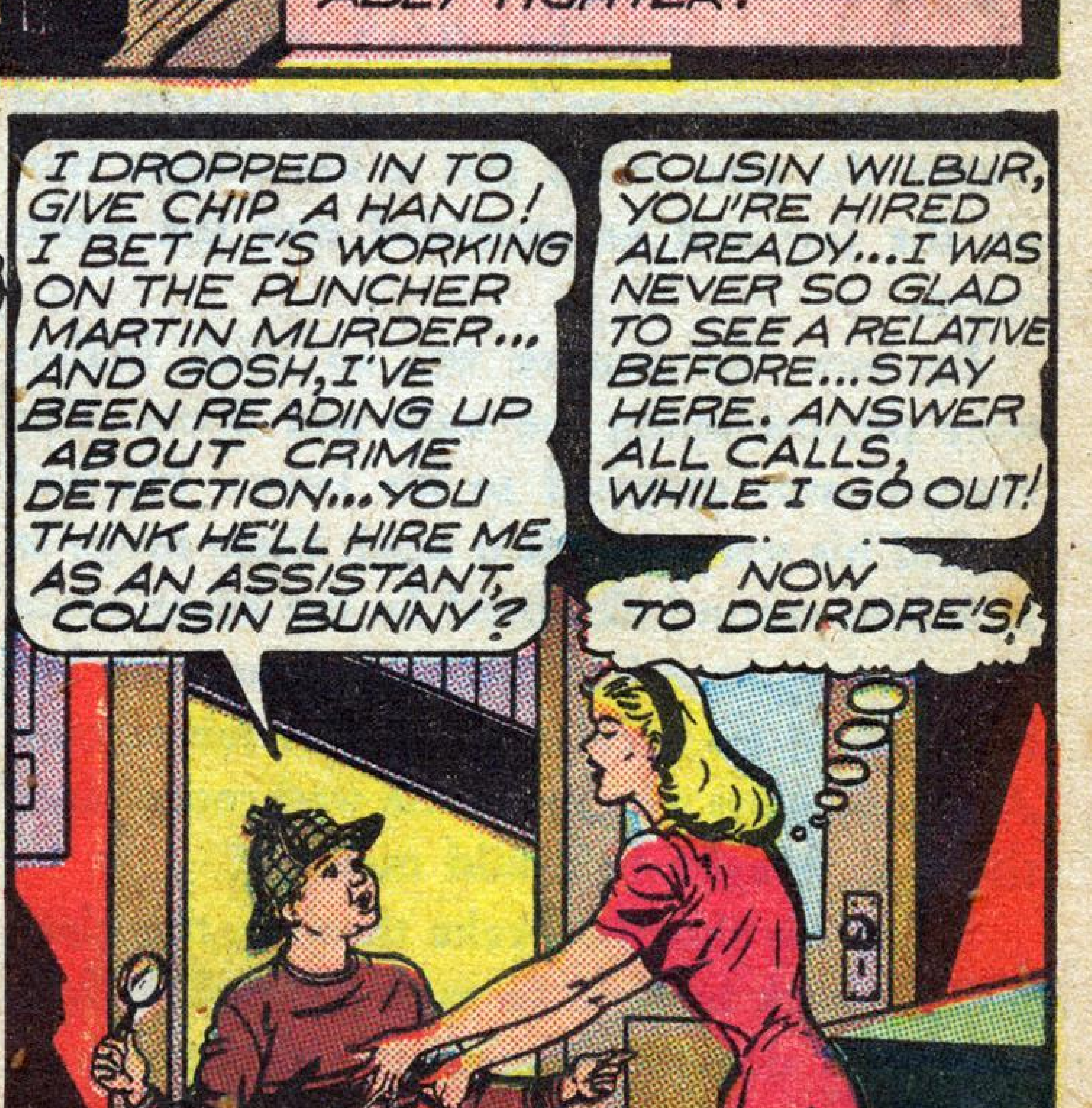

CHAPTER III
STARTLING DISCOVERY!
MY LAST WARNING! THEN I STRIKE!
CHIP FOUND DEIRDRE DALE, LOVELY NIGHT-CLUB ENTERTAINER, SHOT TO DEATH AND WITH HER MURDER GOES THE SECRET SHE WAS ABOUT TO DIVULGE TO HIM... BUT RUTHLESS GUN-MEN ARE SURE CHIP KNOWS TOO MUCH, FOR ON LEAVING DEIRDRE'S HOME HE WAS SEIZED AND SHANGHAIED... AND MURDER THREADS DRAW INEXORABLY TIGHTER!


MEANWHILE... BACK AT CHIP'S OFFICE...
I'M SUPPOSED TO BE HOLDING DOWN THE FORT... BUT NOTHING'S HAPPENING! IT'S QUIETER THAN A MORGUE... WISH I KNEW WHAT CHIP'S DOING... WONDER WHAT DEIRDRE'S TELLING HIM... WISH I WERE WITH CHIP RIGHT NOW!
HI, BUNNY!


I DROPPED IN TO GIVE CHIP A HAND! I BET HE'S WORKING ON THE PUNCHER MARTIN MURDER... AND GOSH, I'VE BEEN READING UP ABOUT CRIME DETECTION... YOU THINK HE'LL HIRE ME AS AN ASSISTANT, COUSIN BUNNY?
COUSIN WILBUR, YOU'RE HIRED ALREADY... I WAS NEVER SO GLAD TO SEE A RELATIVE BEFORE... STAY HERE. ANSWER ALL CALLS, WHILE I GO OUT!
NOW TO DEIRDRE'S!

A QUICK TRIP ACROSS TOWN... AND AN AWE-FILLED EYEFUL!
MURDERED! SHE MUST HAVE BEEN KILLED TO KEEP HER FROM TELLING WHAT SHE KNEW...WONDER WHERE CHIP WENT? PROBABLY ON A LEAD OF SOME KIND...I'LL LOOK AROUND! IT WOULD BE WONDERFUL IF I UNCOVERED SOMETHING IMPORTANT!
SO BUNNY SEARCHES, LITTLE KNOWING THE PERIL CONFRONTING HER FAVORITE DETECTIVE.....
HERE HE IS...SIGNED, SEALED, DELIVERED!
OOH... WHERE AM...? OH, HENNIS! I MIGHT'VE KNOWN...SO YOU COULDN'T KEEP YOUR GORILLAS OFF MY TRAIL! HAD TO SEND OUT SOME MORE---
SHUT UP, CHANCE! I DON'T WANT CONVERSATION! ALL I WANT FROM YOU IS ANSWERS! WHERE IS IT...? WHERE'S THE LETTER DEIRDRE GAVE YOU?
LETTER? I DON'T HAVE ANY... WHAT KIND OF LETTER?
QUIT PLAYING DUMB, BRIGHT BOY... A LETTER NAMING ME, IN CASE SHE GOT HERSELF LIQUIDATED! MY MEN SAW YOU LEAVE HER PLACE! YOU DIDN'T GO UP THERE TO PLAY CROQUET... SHE MUST'VE TOLD YOU WHERE TO FIND THAT LETTER, MAYBE EVEN HANDED IT OVER TO YOU BEFORE TODAY...
WELL... WHERE IS IT? STOP STALLING, AND TALK FAST!
HE'LL NEVER BELIEVE I HAVEN'T THAT LETTER...AND HE'LL NEVER RELEASE ME... MAYBE IF I PRETEND I KNOW ALL ABOUT IT, I MIGHT FIND OUT THINGS AND MAYBE EVEN GET OUT OF THIS JAM...
WELL... I'M LOSING PATIENCE, CHANCE! MY TRIGGER FINGER'S STARTING A JIG... WHAT ABOUT IT?
ALL RIGHT! WHAT'S THE USE OF KIDDING YOU? DEIRDRE TURNED THE LETTER OVER TO ME LAST NIGHT... I READ IT AND WHAT A PRETTY STORY... SHE DIDN'T LEAVE OUT A TRICK...SPILLED EVERYTHING!

THAT LITTLE MINX... THAT'S WHAT I GET FOR EVER TRUSTING HER... I WAS CRAZY ABOUT HER... AND SHE SANG THE SAME TUNE ABOUT ME... BUT AS SOON AS SHE GOT WIND OF MY PAY-OFFS, SHE CHANGED THE SONG... TRIED TO BLACKMAIL ME!
PAY-OFFS! NOW I GET IT!
SHE SURE HAD PLENTY ON YOU, HENNIS, WITH ALL THOSE PAY-OFFS YOU MADE TO FIGHTERS!
BUT PUNCHER MARTIN WOULDN'T TAKE YOUR BRIBE TO LOSE THE BOUT, SO YOU MADE SURE HE LOST IT, HENNIS... THE STRYCHNINE WAY!
THAT'S A LIE! I TRIED TO BUY PUNCHER OFF-IT DIDN'T WORK, BUT THAT'S AS FAR AS I WENT... AND I HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH THE BUMPING OFF OF DEIRDRE EITHER... WHEN MY BOYS WENT TO GET THE LETTER FROM HER, SHE WAS ALREADY DEAD!
THEY SEARCHED HER PLACE AND GOT OUT BEFORE YOU CAME IN... YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME, DO YOU? BUT THAT DOESN'T BOTHER ME, AS LONG AS I HAVE THAT LETTER! CHANCE, I'M GIVING YOU JUST 20 SECONDS TO TELL ME WHERE IT IS.... AND IT BETTER BE THE TRUTH OR WE'LL KNOW SOON ENOUGH! START COUNTING, BABE....
1-2-3---
15- 16- 17-
HA-HA-HA-HO-HO-HO'-HAW! THAT'S ENOUGH! I'LL TALK NOW! WHAT DO YOU SUPPOSE I DID WITH THE LETTER, FRAMED IT? I TURNED IT OVER TO THE POLICE... AND I'VE JUST STALLED YOU LONG ENOUGH TO GIVE THEM TIME TO.... HERE THEY ARE! O.K., DONOVAN....
THAT THREW YOU OFF-GUARD... AND THIS THROWS YOU OFF YOUR FEET!
WHAT'S THE NOISE? HEY!
HE'S GETTIN' AWAY! WE'LL STOP HIM!

A SECOND LATER...
UGH!
CAN'T STOP NOW!
IF I CAN JUST GET TO THE STREET...OH, OH...ANOTHER THUG! HE SEES ME... I'LL HAVE TO DETOUR!
I DIDN'T WIN BROAD JUMP CONTESTS IN COLLEGE FOR NOTHING! MMM, I'M STILL ON HENNIS' PROPERTY... THIS BUILDING'S A PART OF IT!
AS THE INTREPID SLEUTH RACES ACROSS THE ROOF.....
THERE HE GOES! C'MON!
THEY'RE AFTER ME AGAIN... GOT TO GET OFF HERE, AND FAST! MMM, THAT ROPE...
SWIFTLY TWIRLING ONE END...
JUST IN TIME...THEY'VE REACHED THE ROOF!
SHORT MOMENTS LATER.....
YOU CAN'T SHOOT INTO THE CROWD! C'MON BACK!
HENNIS AIN'T GOING TO LIKE THIS!
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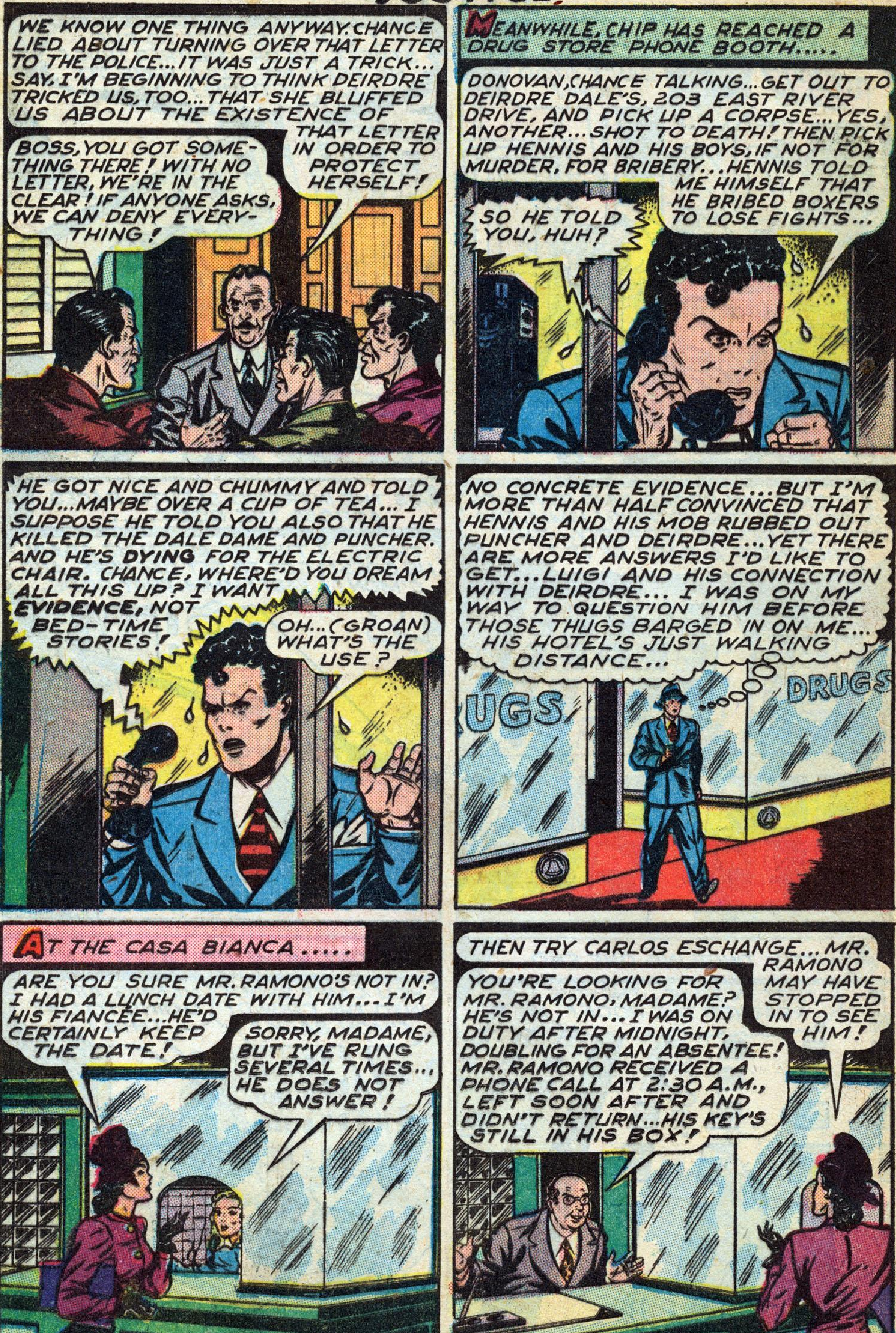
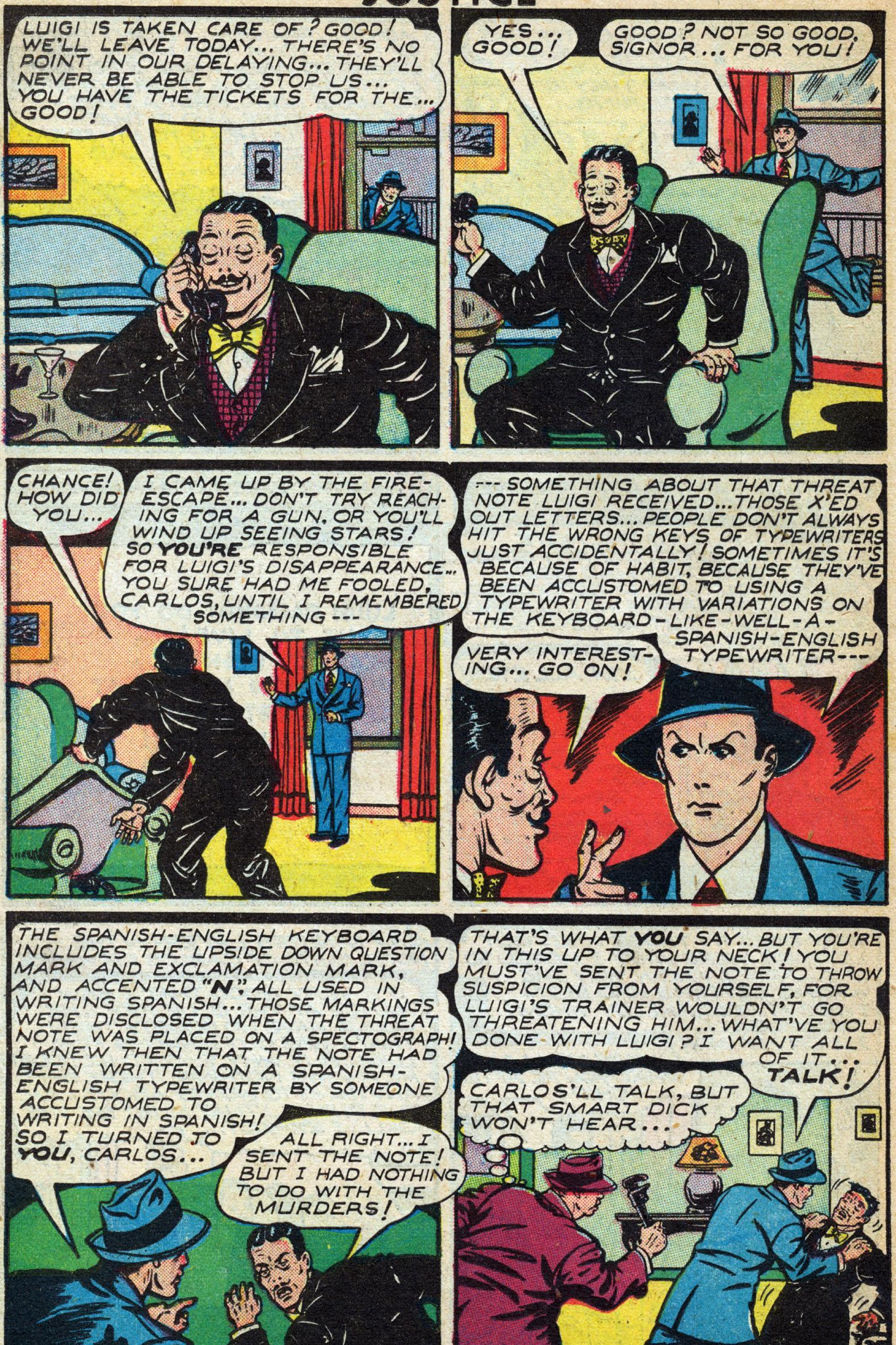

WE KNOW ONE THING ANYWAY. CHANCE LIED ABOUT TURNING OVER THAT LETTER TO THE POLICE...IT WAS JUST A TRICK... SAY, I'M BEGINNING TO THINK DEIRDRE TRICKED US, TOO...THAT SHE BLUFFED US ABOUT THE EXISTENCE OF THAT LETTER IN ORDER TO PROTECT HERSELF!
BOSS, YOU GOT SOMETHING THERE! WITH NO LETTER, WE'RE IN THE CLEAR! IF ANYONE ASKS, WE CAN DENY EVERYTHING!
MEANWHILE, CHIP HAS REACHED A DRUG STORE PHONE BOOTH....
DONOVAN, CHANCE TALKING...GET OUT TO DEIRDRE DALE'S, 203 EAST RIVER DRIVE, AND PICK UP A CORPSE...YES, ANOTHER...SHOT TO DEATH! THEN PICK UP HENNIS AND HIS BOYS, IF NOT FOR MURDER, FOR BRIBERY...HENNIS TOLD ME HIMSELF THAT HE BRIBED BOXERS TO LOSE FIGHTS...
SO HE TOLD YOU, HUH?
HE GOT NICE AND CHUMMY AND TOLD YOU...MAYBE OVER A CUP OF TEA... I SUPPOSE HE TOLD YOU ALSO THAT HE KILLED THE DALE DAME AND PUNCHER. AND HE'S **DYING** FOR THE ELECTRIC CHAIR. CHANCE, WHERE'D YOU DREAM ALL THIS UP? I WANT **EVIDENCE**, NOT BED-TIME STORIES!
OH...(GROAN) WHAT'S THE USE?
NO CONCRETE EVIDENCE...BUT I'M MORE THAN HALF CONVINCED THAT HENNIS AND HIS MOB RUBBED OUT PUNCHER AND DEIRDRE...YET THERE ARE MORE ANSWERS I'D LIKE TO GET...LUIGI AND HIS CONNECTION WITH DEIRDRE... I WAS ON MY WAY TO QUESTION HIM BEFORE THOSE THUGS BARGED IN ON ME... HIS HOTEL'S JUST WALKING DISTANCE...
RUGS
DRUGS
AT THE CASA BIANCA.....
ARE YOU SURE MR. RAMONO'S NOT IN? I HAD A LUNCH DATE WITH HIM...I'M HIS FIANCÉE...HE'D CERTAINLY KEEP THE DATE!
SORRY, MADAME, BUT I'VE RUNG SEVERAL TIMES..., HE DOES NOT ANSWER!
THEN TRY CARLOS ESCHANGE...MR. RAMONO MAY HAVE STOPPED IN TO SEE HIM!
YOU'RE LOOKING FOR MR. RAMONO, MADAME? HE'S NOT IN...I WAS ON DUTY AFTER MIDNIGHT, DOUBLING FOR AN ABSENTEE! MR. RAMONO RECEIVED A PHONE CALL AT 2:30 A.M., LEFT SOON AFTER AND DIDN'T RETURN...HIS KEY'S STILL IN HIS BOX!

LUIGI LEFT, AND DIDN'T---? OH, HERE'S MR. CHANCE! AM I GLAD TO SEE YOU! A TERRIBLE THING HAS HAPPENED... LUIGI'S GONE. WE TRIED HIS SUITE AND---
GONE! CLERK, GET A PASS KEY TO 410... WE'RE GOING TO FIND OUT FOR CERTAIN!
Soon...
WHAT HAPPENED? I WAS ASLEEP... THE OPERATOR WOKE ME... SHE SAID SOMETHING ABOUT LUIGI!
OH! HOW DREADFUL... THE THREAT! THE WHITE DEATH! HE MUST HAVE BEEN LURED AWAY SOMEHOW!
GONE ALL RIGHT! HIS BED HASN'T BEEN SLEPT IN!
YOU MEAN, HE'S BEEN GONE ALL NIGHT? THAT'S NOTHING THEN... I KNOW LUIGI... HE WAS THROUGH A BAD STRAIN LAST NIGHT! WHEN HE GETS TOO EXCITED, HE IS APT TO GO OFF ON A DRINKING SPREE... HE'S DONE THAT BEFORE! I'LL GET DRESSED AND LOOK FOR HIM... IN THE BARS...
YOU THINK THEN...? LUIGI DID WANT TO DRINK LAST NIGHT! I HOPE THAT'S IT!
SURE IT IS... GO HOME AND DON'T WORRY! YOU'LL GET WORD SOON!
SOON AFTER...
I'M NOT SO SURE THAT'S ALL IT IS... THERE'S STILL THAT THREAT NOTE PUZZLE AND THE THEFT OF THE BLACK BOOK... MMM, GUESS I'LL PICK UP THE CAR AND GO BACK TO THE OFFICE! MAYBE BUNNY'S HAD SOME WORD...
CASA BIAN
WILBUR...! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? WHERE'S BUNNY?
HUH? OH, CHIP... SHE WENT OUT AND PUT ME IN CHARGE... I HAD AN IDEA IT WAS SOMETHING AWFUL IMPORTANT, THE WAY SHE WHIZZED OUT OF HERE. AND OH BOY IT IS!
SHE CALLED UP ABOUT 10 MINUTES AGO, AND SAID AS SOON AS I HEAR OR SEE YOU, TO TELL YOU TO MEET HER AT THE BLUE KEY BAR, USUAL TABLE! SHE SAID SHE'D BEEN AT DEAR-DEAR, SOMEBODY'S PLACE AND FOUND IMPORTANT INFORMATION!
SO SHE WENT TO DEIRDRE'S... YOU BET I'M HEADING FOR THE BLUE KEY—ON THE DOUBLE!

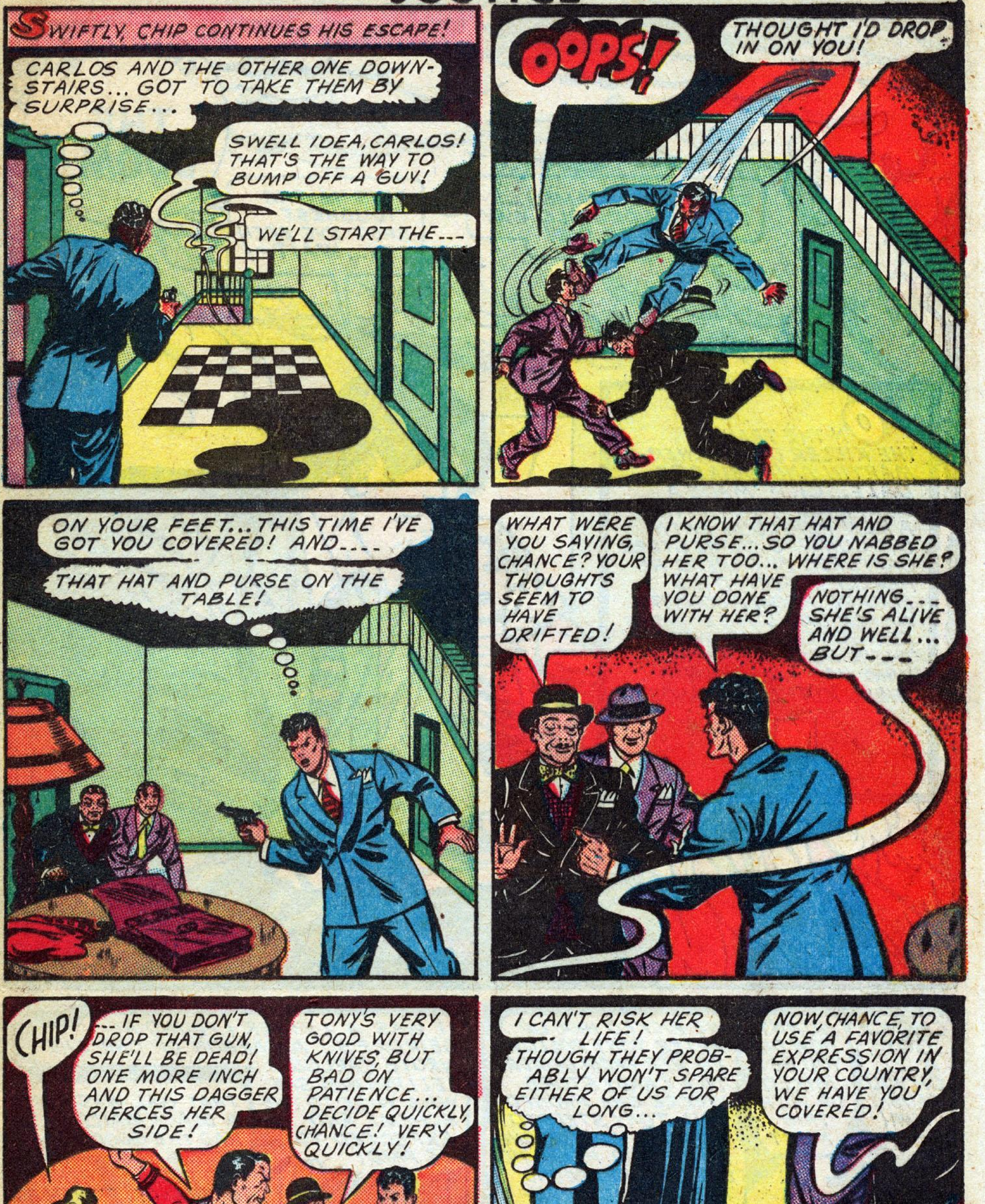
SHORTLY AFTER, CHIP'S FAMILIAR ROADSTER DRAWS UP TO THE CURB OF THE BLUE KEY, FAVORITE WINE-AND-DINE SPOT OF CHIP'S AND BUNNY'S, WHEN THAT BUSY DARING DUO HAS TIME TO WINE AND DINE... CHIP HURRIES IN, HIS KEEN EYES LOOK ABOUT EAGERLY, THEN ANXIOUSLY, WORRIEDLY, FOR...
NO BUNNY...
SAM, HAVE YOU SEEN BUNNY HERE?
NO, MR. CHANCE. SHE AIN'T BEEN HERE OR I WOULDN'T HAVE MISSED THAT BABE... JUST THE SAME, ASK JOEY AT THE BAR!
NOPE, CHIP, DIDN'T SEE A SIGN OF YOUR GIRL! YOU KNOW DAMES, THEY'RE NEVER ON TIME!
THIS ONE IS... SHE SHOULD HAVE BEEN HERE BY NOW... I HOPE NOTHING'S --- HO! THERE'S CARLOS COMING IN!
WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE, CARLOS? ANY WORD ABOUT LUIGI?
NOT YET... I'VE BEEN TO 5 OR 6 PLACES ALREADY. BARTENDER, YOU KNOW WHO LUIGI RAMONO IS, YES? HAS HE BEEN HERE?
WHAT IS THIS? EVERYONE LOOKING FOR EVERYONE ELSE!
HAVEN'T SEEN LUIGI SINCE THE NIGHT BEFORE LAST WHEN HE COME IN FOR A COUPLE OF RYES. I TOLD HIM HE CAN'T WIN A FIGHT THAT WAY! THEN YOU COME IN AND PULLED HIM OUT!
YES... WHAT A TIME I HAD! WHEN LUIGI STARTS DRINKING RYE! AND HE LOVES IT... HE GOES UNDER UNLESS I STOP HIM. WELL, I'LL KEEP LOOKING. ADIOS, SIGNORS!
RYE?
RYE...?
BART BAXTER'S REPORT SAID... HMM, THAT'S FUNNY...
WHAT'S THE TROUBLE? YOU LOOK, LIKE SOMETHING'S HIT YOU!
SNAP

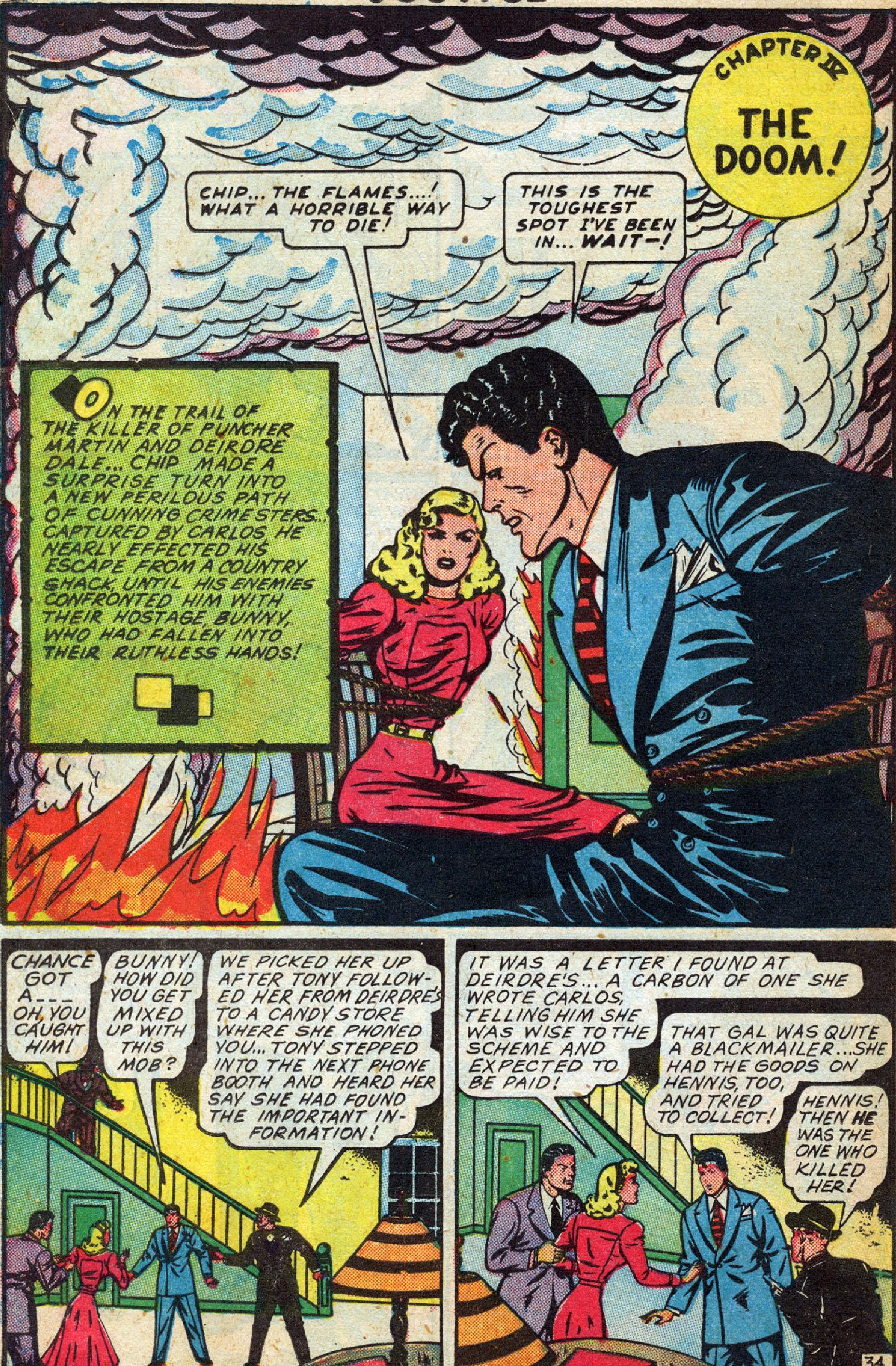
SOMETHING DID HIT ME! ADIOS, SIGNOR JOEY!
THESE DETECTIVE FELLAS... NEVER CAN FIGURE OUT WHAT THEY'RE FIGURING...
ADIOS... SPANISH... I DIDN'T THINK OF IT... I TOOK TOO MUCH FOR GRANTED ABOUT THE X'ED OUT LETTERS! I'VE A COUPLE OF STOPS TO MAKE NOW... FIRST A TYPEWRITER STORE, AND IF THAT CHECKS I'LL HEAD TO MY FRIEND BILL DENTON... HE'S A LAB TECHNICIAN AND...
BLUE KEY
NOT LONG AFTER, CHIP RECEIVES READY COOPERATION AT DENTON'S LAB...
I PLACED THE NOTE UNDER THE SPECTOGRAPH GLASS... THE LETTERS THAT HAD BEEN CROSSED OUT ARE UNDERSCORED... THIS SPECTOGRAPH WILL CLEARLY BRING THEM OUT MAGNIFIED... HERE GOES, CHIP!
I'M ALL EYES!
WHAT THE SPECTOGRAPH REVEALS...
LUIGI RAMONO: DO YOU WANT TO LIVE¿? DOÑÑNT FIGHT PUÑNCHER MARTIN AT THĒ SPORT GARDEN OR YOULL DIE¡!
White Death
THAT DOES IT! THOSE X'ED OUT LETTERS WERE WHAT I HOPED TO SEE... NOW I KNOW WHY THE WRONG LETTERS HAD BEEN TYPED AT FIRST, AND BY WHOM! THANKS, BILL! I'M ON MY WAY!
HOPE YOU LAND WHAT YOU'RE AFTER, CHIP!
20 MINUTES LATER- IN THE HOTEL SUITE OF CARLOS ESCHANGE.
IT'S VERY GOOD THAT I SAW CHANCE AT THE BLUE KEY... HE COULD HAVE NO DOUBTS THEN THAT I WAS OUT LOOKING FOR LUIGI... BUT WHY SHOULD HE DOUBT? HE KNOWS NOTHING... THERE ISN'T ANYTHING TO WORRY ABOUT... AH, THE PHONE... THAT MUST BE THE CALL I EXPECT...
RING RING

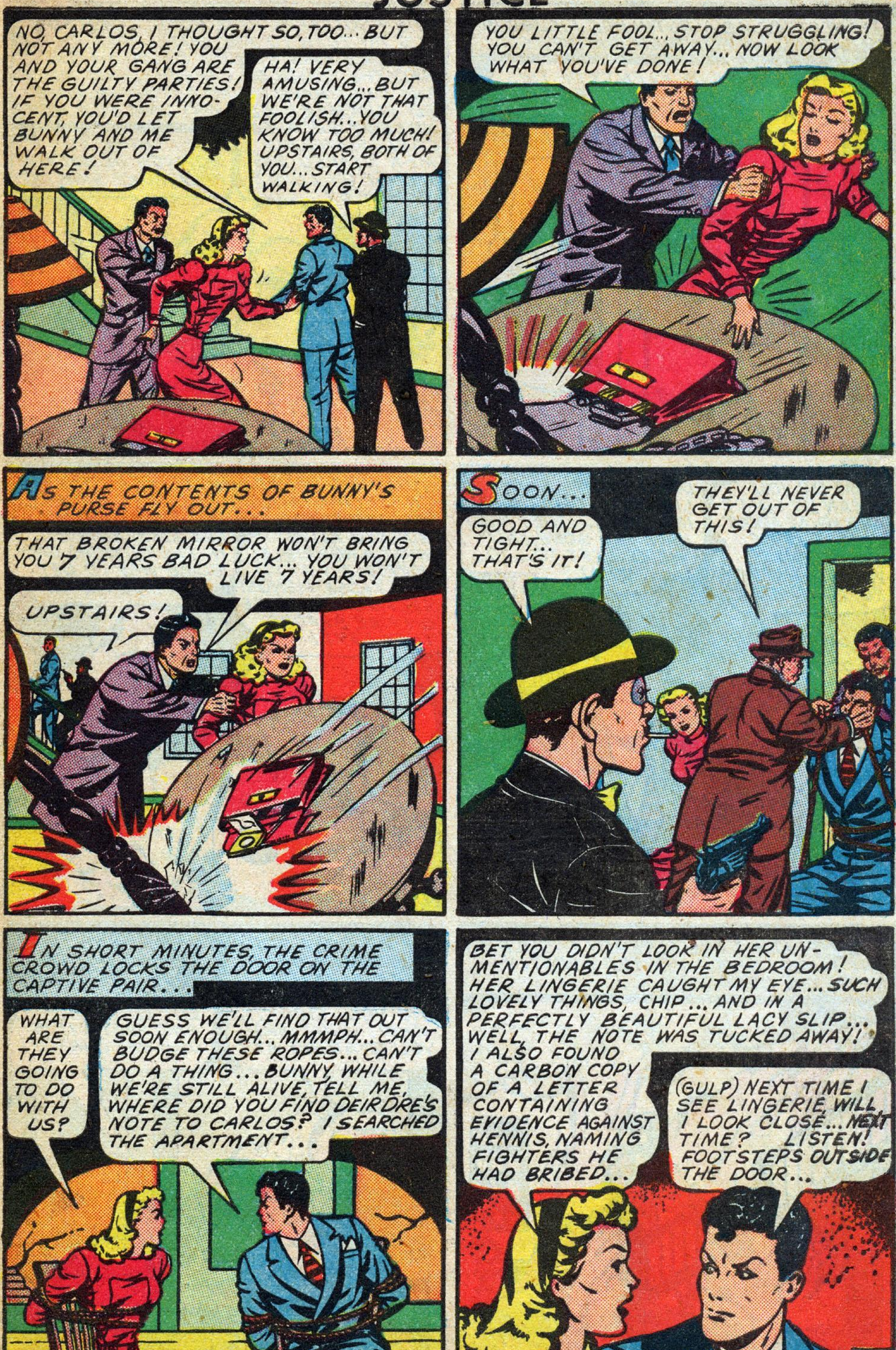

LUIGI IS TAKEN CARE OF? GOOD! WE'LL LEAVE TODAY... THERE'S NO POINT IN OUR DELAYING... THEY'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO STOP US... YOU HAVE THE TICKETS FOR THE... GOOD!
YES... GOOD!
GOOD? NOT SO GOOD, SIGNOR... FOR YOU!
CHANCE! HOW DID YOU...
I CAME UP BY THE FIRE-ESCAPE... DON'T TRY REACHING FOR A GUN, OR YOU'LL WIND UP SEEING STARS! SO **YOU'RE** RESPONSIBLE FOR LUIGI'S DISAPPEARANCE... YOU SURE HAD ME FOOLED, CARLOS, UNTIL I REMEMBERED SOMETHING ---
--- SOMETHING ABOUT THAT THREAT NOTE LUIGI RECEIVED... THOSE X'ED OUT LETTERS... PEOPLE DON'T ALWAYS HIT THE WRONG KEYS OF TYPEWRITERS JUST ACCIDENTALLY! SOMETIMES IT'S BECAUSE OF HABIT, BECAUSE THEY'VE BEEN ACCUSTOMED TO USING A TYPEWRITER WITH VARIATIONS ON THE KEYBOARD - LIKE - WELL - A - SPANISH-ENGLISH TYPEWRITER ---
VERY INTERESTING... GO ON!
THE SPANISH-ENGLISH KEYBOARD INCLUDES THE UPSIDE DOWN QUESTION MARK AND EXCLAMATION MARK, AND ACCENTED "**N**", ALL USED IN WRITING SPANISH... THOSE MARKINGS WERE DISCLOSED WHEN THE THREAT NOTE WAS PLACED ON A SPECTOGRAPH! I KNEW THEN THAT THE NOTE HAD BEEN WRITTEN ON A SPANISH-ENGLISH TYPEWRITER BY SOMEONE ACCUSTOMED TO WRITING IN SPANISH! SO I TURNED TO **YOU**, CARLOS...
ALL RIGHT... I SENT THE NOTE! BUT I HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH THE MURDERS!
THAT'S WHAT **YOU** SAY... BUT YOU'RE IN THIS UP TO YOUR NECK! YOU MUST'VE SENT THE NOTE TO THROW SUSPICION FROM YOURSELF, FOR LUIGI'S TRAINER WOULDN'T GO THREATENING HIM... WHAT'VE YOU DONE WITH LUIGI? I WANT ALL OF IT... **TALK!**
CARLOS'LL TALK, BUT THAT SMART DICK WON'T HEAR...

AS THE CRAFTY KOOPIE RAISES THE MONKEY WRENCH...
I HEARD YOU BREATHING BEHIND ME, ADENOIDS!
A SECOND LATER...
THAT WILL HOLD HIM... THE CHLOROFORM, KOOPIE! QUICK!
THE STUNNED SLEUTH STIRS, MAKING A FRANTIC, VALIANT EFFORT TO FIGHT OFF HIS FOES... WHEN...
THERE! I'LL... OHHH...
THAT DID IT! THE STUFF'S WORKING!
HE WAS TOO CLEVER FOR HIS OWN GOOD. SUCH PEOPLE DON'T LIVE LONG... WE'LL TAKE HIM DOWN BY THE FIRE-ESCAPE, KOOPIE!
THAT'LL BE EASY-AND THE CAR'S WAITING!
SOME TIME LATER, ON A LONELY TRAIL OUT OF THE CITY...
HE WON'T COME TO FOR ANOTHER WHILE YET... I GAVE HIM PLENTY... NOT BAD. WE'RE AT THE SHACK, ALREADY!
WON'T TONY BE SURPRISED WHEN WE BRING IN THIS ONE, TOO!
HALF AN HOUR LATER...
OHH... NOW WHERE AM... YOU, AGAIN! WITH YOUR ARTILLERY!
YEH, AND I'M STAYING RIGHT HERE UNTIL THEY'RE READY FOR YOU!

TIME TICKS TENSELY...
I'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF THIS, BUT HOW? ANY MOVE I MAKE - AND THAT TRIGGER-HAPPY GUNMAN WILL MATCH IT WITH BULLETS... IF I CAN ONLY GET HIM TO RELAX BY TAKING HIS MIND FROM... MIND?... HE'S NOT BRIGHT...
KOOPIE, DON'T YOU GET TIRED OF HOLDING THAT GUN?
I GET TIRED? NOT A CHANCE! I LIKE THE FEEL OF THEM... THEY MAKE ME FEEL STRONG!
YOU DON'T SAY? NOTHING WOULD MAKE ME FEEL AS STRONG AS A NICE, THICK, JUICY STEAK, WITH FRENCH FRIES... MMM... DOESN'T THAT APPEAL TO YOU?
NAW... I HAD STEAK TODAY FOR BREAKFAST... AND FOR LUNCH I HAD STEAK... I'M BORED WITH IT! YOU KNOW WHAT I COULD REALLY GO FOR? PEANUTS!!! I COULD EAT THEM ANY TIME!
IF THIS WORKS...
YOU DON'T MEAN IT? I'VE A BAG OF THEM RIGHT HERE IN MY POCKET... MY LEFT-HAND POCKET!
I BOUGHT THEM FOR MY LITTLE NIECE, BUT... IF YOU DON'T WANT THEM, I'LL EAT THEM... I'M HUNGRY!
OH NO! YOU'RE NOT GETTING THEM... KEEP YOUR HAND OUT OF YOUR POCKET... I'M TAKING 'EM FOR MYSELF AND WATCH YOURSELF WHILE I DO! ONE MOVE FROM YOU, AND THIS GUN GOES OFF... PEANUTS! ...YUMM!
HIS FERRET EYES GLUED ON CHIP, KOOPIE REACHES A HAND INTO HIS PRISONER'S POCKET AND HIMSELF MAKES A FIRST MIS-STEP....
OW!
ONE LIGHTNING SECOND LATER, A PUNCH-PACKED FIST SLASHES OUT...
MY KNIFE WAS IN THAT POCKET! I OPENED THE SHARP BLADE BY WORKING MY FINGERS FROM THE OUTSIDE AND WHEN YOU REACHED IN, YOU WERE CUT... NO PEANUTS, BUT I'M BEGINNING TO LOVE THEM!


SWIFTLY, CHIP CONTINUES HIS ESCAPE!
CARLOS AND THE OTHER ONE DOWNSTAIRS... GOT TO TAKE THEM BY SURPRISE...
SWELL IDEA, CARLOS! THAT'S THE WAY TO BUMP OFF A GUY!
WE'LL START THE---
OOPS!
THOUGHT I'D DROP IN ON YOU!
ON YOUR FEET... THIS TIME I'VE GOT YOU COVERED! AND----
THAT HAT AND PURSE ON THE TABLE!
WHAT WERE YOU SAYING, CHANCE? YOUR THOUGHTS SEEM TO HAVE DRIFTED!
I KNOW THAT HAT AND PURSE... SO YOU NABBED HER TOO... WHERE IS SHE? WHAT HAVE YOU DONE WITH HER?
NOTHING--- SHE'S ALIVE AND WELL... BUT---
CHIP!
... IF YOU DON'T DROP THAT GUN, SHE'LL BE DEAD! ONE MORE INCH AND THIS DAGGER PIERCES HER SIDE!
TONY'S VERY GOOD WITH KNIVES, BUT BAD ON PATIENCE... DECIDE QUICKLY, CHANCE! VERY QUICKLY!
I CAN'T RISK HER LIFE! THOUGH THEY PROBABLY WON'T SPARE EITHER OF US FOR LONG...
NOW, CHANCE, TO USE A FAVORITE EXPRESSION IN YOUR COUNTRY, WE HAVE YOU COVERED!

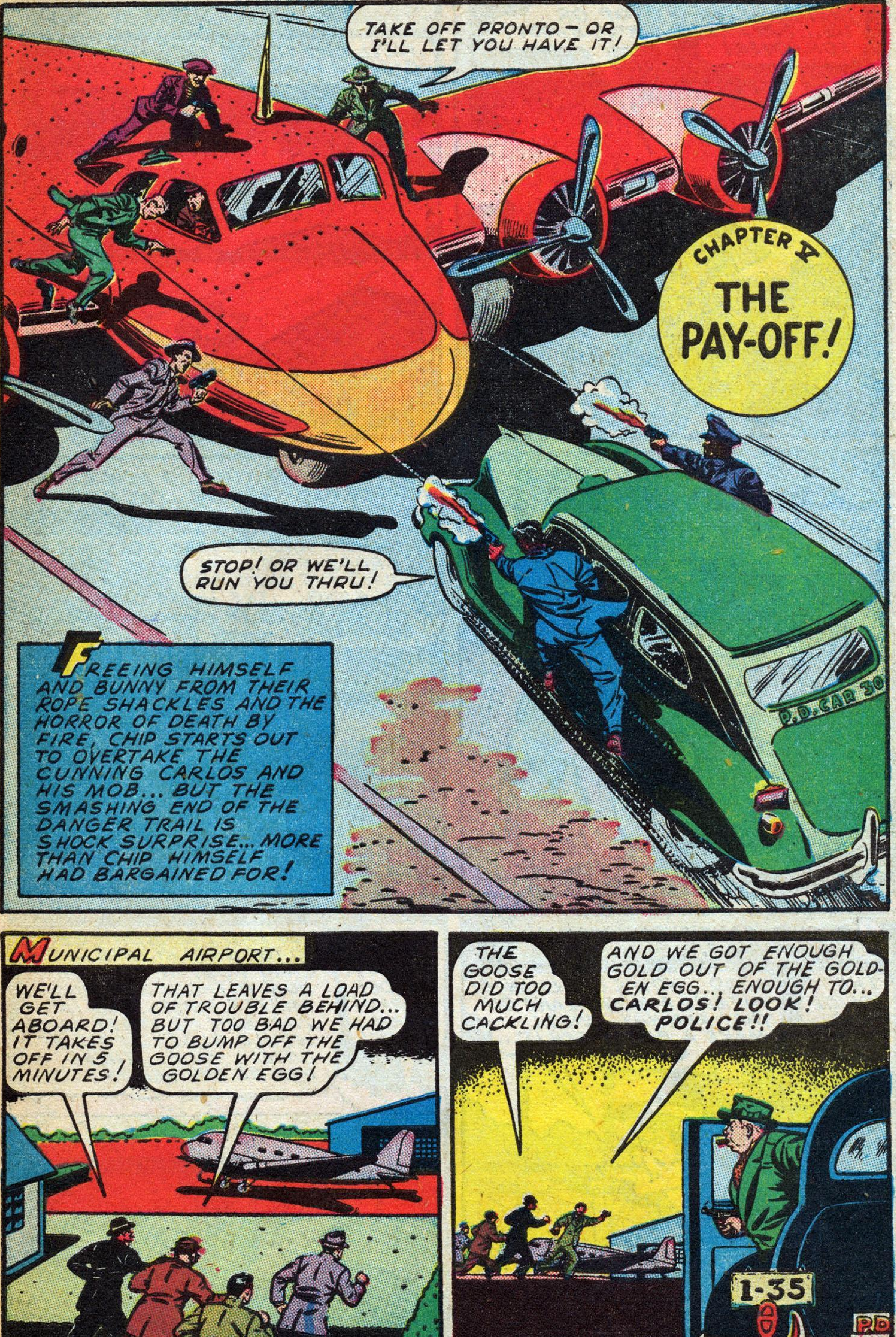

CHAPTER IV
THE DOOM!
CHIP... THE FLAMES....! WHAT A HORRIBLE WAY TO DIE!
THIS IS THE TOUGHEST SPOT I'VE BEEN IN... WAIT—!
ON THE TRAIL OF THE KILLER OF PUNCHER MARTIN AND DEIRDRE DALE... CHIP MADE A SURPRISE TURN INTO A NEW PERILOUS PATH OF CUNNING CRIMESTERS. CAPTURED BY CARLOS, HE NEARLY EFFECTED HIS ESCAPE FROM A COUNTRY SHACK, UNTIL HIS ENEMIES CONFRONTED HIM WITH THEIR HOSTAGE, BUNNY, WHO HAD FALLEN INTO THEIR RUTHLESS HANDS!
CHANCE GOT A--- OH, YOU CAUGHT HIM!
BUNNY! HOW DID YOU GET MIXED UP WITH THIS MOB?
WE PICKED HER UP AFTER TONY FOLLOWED HER FROM DEIRDRE'S TO A CANDY STORE WHERE SHE PHONED YOU... TONY STEPPED INTO THE NEXT PHONE BOOTH AND HEARD HER SAY SHE HAD FOUND THE IMPORTANT INFORMATION!
IT WAS A LETTER I FOUND AT DEIRDRE'S... A CARBON OF ONE SHE WROTE CARLOS, TELLING HIM SHE WAS WISE TO THE SCHEME AND EXPECTED TO BE PAID!
THAT GAL WAS QUITE A BLACKMAILER... SHE HAD THE GOODS ON HENNIS, TOO, AND TRIED TO COLLECT!
HENNIS! THEN HE WAS THE ONE WHO KILLED HER!


NO, CARLOS, I THOUGHT SO, TOO... BUT NOT ANY MORE! YOU AND YOUR GANG ARE THE GUILTY PARTIES! IF YOU WERE INNOCENT, YOU'D LET BUNNY AND ME WALK OUT OF HERE!
HA! VERY AMUSING... BUT WE'RE NOT THAT FOOLISH... YOU KNOW TOO MUCH! UPSTAIRS, BOTH OF YOU... START WALKING!
YOU LITTLE FOOL... STOP STRUGGLING! YOU CAN'T GET AWAY... NOW LOOK WHAT YOU'VE DONE!
AS THE CONTENTS OF BUNNY'S PURSE FLY OUT...
THAT BROKEN MIRROR WON'T BRING YOU 7 YEARS BAD LUCK... YOU WON'T LIVE 7 YEARS!
UPSTAIRS!
SOON...
GOOD AND TIGHT... THAT'S IT!
THEY'LL NEVER GET OUT OF THIS!
IN SHORT MINUTES, THE CRIME CROWD LOCKS THE DOOR ON THE CAPTIVE PAIR...
WHAT ARE THEY GOING TO DO WITH US?
GUESS WE'LL FIND THAT OUT SOON ENOUGH... MMMPH... CAN'T BUDGE THESE ROPES... CAN'T DO A THING... BUNNY, WHILE WE'RE STILL ALIVE, TELL ME, WHERE DID YOU FIND DEIRDRE'S NOTE TO CARLOS? I SEARCHED THE APARTMENT...
BET YOU DIDN'T LOOK IN HER UNMENTIONABLES IN THE BEDROOM! HER LINGERIE CAUGHT MY EYE... SUCH LOVELY THINGS, CHIP... AND IN A PERFECTLY BEAUTIFUL LACY SLIP... WELL, THE NOTE WAS TUCKED AWAY! I ALSO FOUND A CARBON COPY OF A LETTER CONTAINING EVIDENCE AGAINST HENNIS, NAMING FIGHTERS HE HAD BRIBED...
(GULP) NEXT TIME I SEE LINGERIE, WILL I LOOK CLOSE... NEXT TIME? LISTEN! FOOTSTEPS OUTSIDE THE DOOR...

FOOTSTEPS AS A RUTHLESS FIGURE IS EMBARKED ON FIENDISH BUSINESS...
THERE... WE GOT PLENTY OF THIS STUFF ALL OVER THE PLACE NOW... WE'RE ALL SET!
THE FOOTSTEPS HAVE GONE... CHIP, NOW IT'S MY TURN TO ASK QUESTIONS... DEIRDRE WAS KILLED BECAUSE SHE HAD THE GOODS ON CARLOS... THAT MEANS, SHE MUST HAVE FOUND OUT HE MURDERED PUNCHER! BUT WHY WAS PUNCHER KILLED? BECAUSE CARLOS AND HIS MEN STAKED BIG MONEY ON LUIGI'S WINNING?
NO! I THINK THE MOTIVES LIE DEEPER AND MORE SINISTER!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT? AND WHAT ABOUT LUIGI? IS HE INNOCENT? WHAT'S HAPPENED TO HIM?
DON'T KNOW... BUNNY! LISTEN! A CAR'S DRIVING AWAY... THEY MUST HAVE ALL GONE, AND WE'RE LEFT TO... TO... WHAT?
JUMPING JEHOSOPHAT! HEAR THAT CRACKLING SOUND OUTSIDE? IT'S FIRE... AND THESE WALLS ARE LIKE PAPER... IF THERE WERE ONLY SOME WAY TO GET OUT OF HERE!
BURNED ALIVE! WHAT A HORRIBLE, HORRIBLE WAY TO DIE! THOSE FIENDS! SETTING THE PLACE ON FIRE BEFORE THEY LEFT!
YES, FLAMES ARE ALREADY ENGULFING THE FLIMSY SHACK, IGNITED SWIFTLY WITH THE KEROSENE...
WE'RE DONE FOR! IT'S REACHING IN HERE ALREADY... IT WAS NICE KNOWING YOU, CHIP.... CHIP! WHAT ARE YOU STARING AT?
SOMETHING THAT'S POKING OUT OF YOUR CUFF... JUST NOTICED IT... I'VE GOT TO GET IT, AND FAST... IT'S OUR ONE CHANCE!

WITH MUSCLES FLEXED TO HOLD HIS BALANCE, CHIP LEANS OVER GINGERLY, AND...
GLASS! WHAT LUCK! WHEN THE MIRROR BROKE, ONE OF THE PIECES MUST'VE LANDED IN MY CUFF... IF YOU CAN ONLY CUT YOUR ROPE IN TIME...
FEVERISHLY, RELENTLESSLY, THE DETECTIVE WORKS... CUTTING HIS WAY TO FREEDOM...
YOU'VE DONE IT!
AN EASY MATTER TO STEP SPEEDILY OUT OF HIS ROPES... ANOTHER MOMENT TO UNTIE THE CAPTIVE GIRL, AND...
WE CAN'T GET THROUGH THOSE FLAMES!
WE'LL TRY THE OTHER WAY... LOOKS LIKE A DOOR HAD BEEN THERE AND WAS BOARDED UP! THE WOOD'S THIN ENOUGH TO...
A CYCLONIC MINUTE LATER...
THAT DOES IT... WE'RE GOING THROUGH!
IF WE CAN MAKE THOSE BACK STAIRS... THAT LINOLEUM RUG MIGHT HELP!
(COUGH) (COUGH) SMOKE'S SO THICK...
HANG ON, BUNNY, HANG ON...

ONE LAST RUN, AND . . .
WE MADE IT! THAT'S THE DOOR! ...WHAT'S THE MATTER, BUNNY?
OH! I STUMBLED OVER SOMETHING! SOMETHING SOFT! IT FEELS LIKE A-A PERSON!
IT'S LUIGI! I'LL GET HIM OUT... HE'S BADLY BURNED!
HE DIDN'T DIE OF THE BURNS...THERE'S A BULLET HOLE IN HIS HEART... THE HANDIWORK OF CARLOS AND HIS MOB! WE'VE GOT TO CATCH UP WITH THEM, BUNNY...THEY'RE PROBABLY HEADED BACK TO SOUTH AMERICA... I HEARD CARLOS ASK ABOUT TICKETS! HOW ARE YOUR FEET?
WAIT A MINUTE... WE'RE NOT GOING TO WALK TO SOUTH AMERICA!
LATER...
IT'S A WONDER MY FEET HELD OUT! WHAT A HIKE TO THE MAIN ROAD! BUT WE OUGHT TO GET A LIFT NOW!
WE WILL, IF YOU GIVE OUT WITH A SMILE...STOP THAT TRUCK, BUNNY!
SOON AFTER . . .
WE'LL GO AS FAR AS THAT GAS STATION, FELLOW... I'VE A PHONE CALL TO MAKE THAT'S MIGHTY IMPORTANT!
SHUCKS! I HATE TO SEE YOU TWO LEAVE JUST WHEN WE WERE GETTING CHUMMY!
DONOVAN! CHANCE TALKING! IF YOU WANT THE MURDERER OF PUNCHER, DEIRDRE, AND LUIGI... YES, LUIGI GOT IT TOO... GET RIGHT OUT TO THE NEAREST AIRPORT... THAT WOULD BE MUNICIPAL FIELD! YOU SHOULD FIND CARLOS ESCHANGE AND COMPANY BOARDING A PLANE FOR SOUTH AMERICA... THEY'RE THE MURDER GANG, PROBABLY LOOKING FOR THE FASTEST WAY OUT... I'M ON MY WAY TOO... WANT TO BE IN ON THE PAY-OFF?
OO!! I'LL BUY THAT!


TAKE OFF PRONTO — OR I'LL LET YOU HAVE IT!
CHAPTER V
THE PAY-OFF!
STOP! OR WE'LL RUN YOU THRU!
P.D. CAR 30
FREEING HIMSELF AND BUNNY FROM THEIR ROPE SHACKLES AND THE HORROR OF DEATH BY FIRE, CHIP STARTS OUT TO OVERTAKE THE CUNNING CARLOS AND HIS MOB... BUT THE SMASHING END OF THE DANGER TRAIL IS SHOCK SURPRISE... MORE THAN CHIP HIMSELF HAD BARGAINED FOR!
MUNICIPAL AIRPORT...
WE'LL GET ABOARD! IT TAKES OFF IN 5 MINUTES!
THAT LEAVES A LOAD OF TROUBLE BEHIND... BUT TOO BAD WE HAD TO BUMP OFF THE GOOSE WITH THE GOLDEN EGG!
THE GOOSE DID TOO MUCH CACKLING!
AND WE GOT ENOUGH GOLD OUT OF THE GOLDEN EGG... ENOUGH TO... CARLOS! LOOK! POLICE!!
1-35
P.D
39

THEY'RE AFTER US... BREAK FOR COVER!
STOP OR WE'LL SHOOT!
CRASHING BULLETS ANSWER DONOVAN...
WE'LL GIVE IT BACK TO THEM!
INTO THE SHED... QUICK!
THE GUNMEN MAKE A SUCCESSFUL DASH...
WE CAN'T KEEP IT UP... BACK, MEN! WE'LL GET TEAR GAS AND FORCE THEM OUT!
AT THE SAME TIME... A NEW REINFORCEMENT ARRIVES... THE STURDY-MUSCLED CHANCE...
DONOVAN AND HIS MEN ARE CAUGHT IN CROSS-FIRE... I'M GOING TO CIRCLE AROUND THE SHED AND SURPRISE THAT GANG... THE HEDGES'LL PROVIDE COVER, IF I GO IN LOW!
BE CAREFUL, CHIP!
AS CHIP CAUTIOUSLY BEGINS HIS MISSION...
THE POLICE ARE FALLING BACK!
GOOD... NOW'S OUR CHANCE! THERE'S A MONOPLANE ON THAT RUNWAY... WE'LL MAKE A BREAK FOR IT... QUICK!
GOOD, WE'VE MADE IT! INSIDE! HURRY! I CAN PILOT!
TOO BAD I COULDN'T GET TO THE SHED IN TIME... CAN'T BUST IN ON THEM NOW WITHOUT SHOWING MYSELF FIRST... AND IF THEY SAW ME, THREE GUNS WOULD BLAST AT ME AT ONCE... MMM... THERE MAY BE ANOTHER WAY TO...

ANOTHER MINUTE, AND THE GLEAMING LITTLE PLANE GLIDES DOWN THE RUNWAY....
WE'RE SAFE!
SMOOTH SAILING FROM NOW ON!
BUT... IN A LIGHTNING FLASH...
LOOK OUT!
TOO LATE.... THE MONOPLANE HITS THE HEAVY DRUM, AND....
OH!
I'VE LOST CON...TROL!
DID YOU SEE THAT, SARGE? THEY WERE TRYING TO GET AWAY, AND THAT DRUM LANDED IN THEIR PATH... HEY, THERE'S CHIP CHANCE!
CHANCE? THAT EXPLAINS HOW IT LANDED THERE... GOOD GOING, CHANCE!
HELP! LET US OUT... WE'RE TRAPPED!
BEFORE WE DO ANY RESCUING, THROW YOUR GUNS OUT THROUGH THE WINDOW... OR YOU CAN STAY THERE!

SOON AFTER....
WHEN WE GET TO HEADQUARTERS, THERE'S PLENTY OF EXPLAINING I WANT... AND A CONFESSION!
YOU'LL GET THEIR CONFESSION... AND, SARGE, HOLD ON TO YOUR HAT, BECAUSE YOU'RE DUE FOR A SURPRISE!
AT HEADQUARTERS....
LET'S HAVE IT! WHY DID YOU MURDER PUNCHER AND THE DALE WOMAN?
WE **DIDN'T!** WE HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH THOSE MURDERS!
STILL STICKING TO THAT STORY, EH? IT WON'T STICK, AND ANYWAY, WE HAVE YOU ON THE KILLING OF LUIGI... I MEAN, THE MAN WHO WAS **POSING** AS LUIGI!
POSING AS LUIGI?
RIGHT! THE **"LUIGI"** WE MET WASN'T THE REAL ONE WHO WAS HERE FIVE YEARS AGO... I SUSPECTED THAT THROUGH BAXTER'S REPORT ABOUT LUIGI'S INTERVIEWS THEN! HIS FAVORITE DRINK WAS **SCOTCH,** YET THIS ONE HAD A PENCHANT FOR **RYE!**
IF THIS WASN'T LUIGI, WHO IN BLAZES WAS HE?
LUIGI'S BROTHER ALONZO... THE BLACK SHEEP OF THE RICH RAMONO FAMILY.... LUIGI AT 19 INHERITED HIS FATHER'S FORTUNE... ALONZO, A YEAR YOUNGER THAN LUIGI, WAS ENTIRELY DISINHERITED, WENT AWAY, AND NOTHING WAS HEARD OF HIM FOR NEARLY TEN YEARS... HE WAS BELIEVED TO HAVE DROWNED IN A SHIPWRECK OFF THE AZORES... THEN ONE NIGHT A YEAR AGO---
"I WAS IN THE GYM WITH LUIGI AND TONY... TONY ASSISTED IN THE TRAINING...."
HE'S IN FINE SHAPE!
LUIGI, YOU'RE GOING ON TO THE CHAMPIONSHIP!
THAT... OR HIS **DEATH!**
WHO ARE...? **ALONZO!** THEY REPORTED YOU **DEAD!**
I HAVE NINE LIVES LIKE A CAT, AND MY EYES ARE GREEN... GREEN WITH ENVY FOR THE MONEY I DIDN'T GET A PENNY OF... I'M TIRED OF WANDERING AROUND POOR! YOU'RE GOING TO SIGN AWAY HALF YOUR FORTUNE TO ME **RIGHT NOW!** I'VE BROUGHT THE NECESSARY STATEMENT... THAT... OR I **KILL** YOU!

I WON'T GIVE YOU MONEY BECAUSE YOU'LL ONLY SQUANDER IT... I KNOW YOUR DRINKING AND GAMBLING WAYS! NEVER... ALONZO!
YOU MADE YOUR CHOICE.. YOU AND YOUR "YES" MEN WILL DIE, RIGHT NOW!
"BUT MY FINGERS WERE ALREADY CLUTCHING A WEAPON, AND I ACTED."
BONG!
HE'S DEAD!
THE GUN WENT OFF BY ACCIDENT... I DIDN'T MEAN TO KILL, ONLY TO FRIGHTEN HIM... YOU... IF YOU HADN'T HURLED THAT OAR... NOW WE ALL LOSE! YOU LOSE A FIGHTER, I LOSE THE FORTUNE ...I'M NOT STAYING TO FACE THE POLICE!
WAIT! NOT SO HASTY! PERHAPS NONE OF US LOSE!
"A THOUGHT HAD STRUCK ME... A DARING IDEA... BUT I TOO WANTED MONEY, AND THERE WAS A FORTUNE..."
YOU LOOK LIKE LUIGI... IF YOU TAKE HIS PLACE, TONY AND I WILL KEEP SILENT, WON'T WE, TONY?
...THAT IS, FOR A GOOD CUT IN THE MONEY!
YES...YES, INDEED!
WELL! I'M BEGINNING TO LIKE THIS VERY MUCH!
IT WAS DONE! NO ONE ELSE KNEW ALONZO HAD RETURNED... WE DISPOSED OF LUIGI'S BODY IN THE SEA, AND ALONZO TOOK HIS PLACE! WE INSTRUCTED HIM CAREFULLY AND HE WAS PERFECT, EXCEPT AS A FIGHTER!
SO WE ANNOUNCED LUIGI'S RETIREMENT TO REST UP... AND DURING THAT TIME WE GROOMED ALONZO TO FIGHT... HE WAS STRONG LIKE LUIGI, AND LEARNED WELL...
THEN CAME THE TRIP HERE, AND THE BOUT WITH PUNCHER... ALONZO KEPT IN CHARACTER AS LUIGI... TO REMIND HIMSELF OF LUIGI'S HABITS, HE WROTE THEM DOWN IN THAT LITTLE BLACK BOOK THAT TONY TOOK AWAY FROM YOU, CHANCE!
SO THAT WAS IT... YOU KNEW IF I READ IT, I'D SUSPECT... GO ON...

ALONZO WAS GETTING OUT OF HAND... HE BEGAN TO SHOW HIS WEAKNESSES, DRINK, FOR INSTANCE, THE RYE...
AND HE FELL IN LOVE WITH TINA TUCKER... WHILE LUIGI HAD FALLEN FOR DEIRDRE... DEIRDRE MUST HAVE SEEN THROUGH ALONZO'S IMPERSONATION! IS THAT WHY SHE WROTE YOU THE LETTER, CARLOS, ASKING FOR MONEY TO KEEP QUIET?
YES, AND MEANWHILE, ALONZO WAS SLIPPING MORE... HE WAS IN SUCH BAD SHAPE, WE KNEW HE COULDN'T WIN AGAINST PUNCHER! WE TRIED TO TALK HIM OUT OF FIGHTING, BUT HE WOULDN'T LISTEN! HE LIKED THE PUBLICITY TOO MUCH... SO I WROTE HIM THE THREAT NOTE TO SCARE HIM... THAT DIDN'T HELP!
SO YOU FINALLY KILLED HIM... BUT WHY DID YOU KILL PUNCHER?
WE **DIDN'T**! WE **DIDN'T** KILL PUNCHER OR DEIRDRE!
YEAH, WE HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH THEM TWO MURDERS!
DON'T TRY TO SELL US THAT... TAKE 'EM AWAY, MEN!
IF THEY THINK THEY'RE GOING TO GET OFF EASIER BY CONFESSING TO JUST **ONE** MURDER... NOT A CHANCE! ONE KILLING WILL FRY THEM, THE SAME AS THREE... WELL, THE CASE IS **CLOSED**!
YES, I GUESS IT... BUT STILL...
WHAT WOULD BE THEIR POINT IN INSISTING THAT THEY DIDN'T COMMIT THE OTHER TWO MURDERS? MAYBE THERE'S SOMETHING WE'VE OVERLOOKED... THERE'S STILL THE HENNIS ANGLE...
NOW, CHANCE YOU STARTING THAT OVER AGAIN? BECAUSE...
SARGE, MISS TUCKER'S HERE! I TOLD HER YOU'D SEE HER! O.K., ISN'T IT?
THE NEXT MOMENT...
I COULDN'T STAND THE WAITING ANY LONGER... HAVE YOU FOUND OUT ANYTHING ABOUT LUIGI? IS HE ALL RIGHT? PLEASE... I MUST KNOW!
MISS TUCKER... BRACE YOURSELF... HE'S BEEN MURDERED!
MY CLIENT, TINA... I HAD FORGOTTEN HER!

LUIGI... MURDERED! (SOB) LUIGI... I LOVED HIM SO... (SOB) WHO-WHO DID IT TO HIM?
CARLOS AND HIS MOB! YOU WON'T FEEL SO BADLY WHEN YOU HEAR THE REST... LUIGI WASN'T LUIGI... HE WAS HIS BLACK-SHEEP BROTHER ALONZO... ALONZO KILLED HIM, TOOK HIS PLACE, AND LIVED ON THE FAMILY FORTUNE!
WHAT! A MURDERER! WHY THAT DIRTY NO GOOD TWO-TIMER! IF THE COPS CAUGHT UP WITH HIM AND I'D MARRIED HIM, WHAT A SUCKER I'D HAVE BEEN PLAYED FOR... THE LOW CROOK!
SOME LANGUAGE COMING FROM A GAL WHO GAVE OUT WITH CULTURE... **CULTURE?** I WONDER...
CALM DOWN, MISS TUCKER. LET'S TALK ABOUT SOMETHING, SAY, CHINESE ART...
WHAT DO YOU PREFER, MISS TUCKER? MING OR PORCELAIN?
HUH?...OH! CHINESE ART... OF COURSE... I MUCH PREFER PORCELAIN!
FUNNY THAT YOU DO, BECAUSE MING AND PORCELAIN ARE THE **SAME THING!** MING IS THE DYNASTY IN WHICH PORCELAIN BECAME MOST POPULAR IN CHINA, AND ANYONE WHO HAS ANY KNOWLEDGE OF CHINESE ART KNOWS THAT... IT'S OBVIOUS YOU KNOW **NOTHING** ABOUT IT... AND THAT SMASHES YOUR ALIBI FOR THE TIME OF PUNCHER'S MURDER! YOU **COULDN'T** HAVE BEEN WITH MANGROSS DISCUSSING CHINESE ART... SOMEONE **ELSE** MUST'VE BEEN THERE IN YOUR PLACE!
SAY, THAT'S RIGHT! BUT WHO TOOK HER PLACE, THEN?
IT ALL FITS NOW... DEIRDRE DALE, WHOSE SPECIALTY AS AN ENTERTAINER WAS **IMPERSONATIONS...** AND BRILLIANT AT THEM! I'D SEEN HER ACT SEVERAL TIMES, BUT DIDN'T CONNECT IT, UNTIL NOW! DEIRDRE'S KNOWLEDGE OF CHINESE ART... SHE GOT THAT FROM HER ASSOCIATION WITH HENNIS WHO HAS QUITE A COLLECTION OF CHINESE ART OBJECTS IN HIS OFFICE... A CLEVER, BRAZEN SCHEME YOU **NEARLY** PUT OVER, TINA, BUT IT'S ALL OVER NOW! NO, YOU DON'T REACH INTO YOUR PURSE!
A FLASHING LUNGE, AND...
THE **MURDER WEAPON!** SO YOU PULLED IT OUT OF YOUR PURSE TO TRY TO HOLD US WHILE YOU ESCAPE!
YOU FIEND! WHY DID I EVER PUT YOU ON THE CASE?
BECAUSE **YOU** WERE **TOO** SMART...TRYING TO TAKE ALL SUSPICION FROM YOURSELF! NOW, WHY'D YOU KILL PUNCHER?

I KNEW PUNCHER YEARS BEFORE! WHEN I BECAME ENGAGED TO "LUIGI", PUNCHER THREATENED TO TELL HIM THINGS ABOUT MY PAST_ THINGS BETTER LEFT FORGOTTEN_ UNLESS I PAID UP BIG... I WAS AFRAID WHAT PUNCHER KNEW WOULD RUIN MY ENGAGEMENT... I GOT THE IDEA TO KILL HIM WITH STRYCHNINE FROM THE "WHITE DEATH" NOTE...
I PAID DEIRDRE $1000 TO IMPERSONATE ME AT THE PARTY-TOLD HER IT WAS FOR A GAG, AND SHE PROMISED TO KEEP IT SECRET... I KNEW HER FROM MY SHOW BUSINESS DAYS... I KNEW HOW MUCH SHE'D DO FOR MONEY... BUT SHE WANTED **MORE** MONEY TO KEEP QUIET... I **HAD** TO KILL HER!
THAT'S WHAT ALL MURDERERS SAY-YOU **HAD** TO KILL... ONLY THERE HAPPENS TO BE A LAW AGAINST IT! PUT THE CUFFS ON HER, CASEY!
AFTER MISS TUCKER IS LOCKED AWAY IN A CELL...
YOU SURE DID A NEAT JOB ON THAT CASE, CHANCE!
BUT THERE'S STILL UNFINISHED BUSINESS... HARRY HENNIS AND HIS MOB! I TELL YOU, DONOVAN, THEY BRIBED FIGHTERS... YOU'VE **GOT** TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT!
WHO SAYS I DIDN'T? FOLLOW ME!
I'LL SUE YOU FOR FALSE ARREST, DONOVAN! YOU'LL PAY PLENTY!
YOU'LL PAY PLENTY, HENNIS-WITH A LONG STRETCH UP THE RIVER... YOU SEE, CHIP-RIGHT AFTER YOU PHONED IN ABOUT HENNIS, I GOT A LETTER FROM DEIRDRE-MAILED THE NIGHT BEFORE, AND CONTAINING FULL EVIDENCE ON HENNIS AND HIS CROOKED DEALS... SO I ACTED!
NOW I **CAN** CALL THIS CASE **CLOSED!**
LATER...
YOU DID A GREAT JOB, CHIP! CAUGHT A MURDERESS AND PUT A STOP TO THE DIRTY ACTIVITIES OF BIG-TIME GAMBLERS!
FUNNY HOW IT WORKED OUT, CHIEF... I WAS HIRED BY A CLIENT I LATER CONVICTED!
BUT THE IMPORTANT THING WAS THAT WE STOPPED THOSE GAMBLERS! AMERICAN SPORTS **MUST BE KEPT CLEAN** FROM UNSCRUPULOUS RACKETEERS! CLEAN SPORTS AND SPORTSMANSHIP ARE THE BASIS FOR **TOLERANCE** AND **DEMOCRACY,** AND **MUST BE PROTECTED!**
AMEN TO THAT STATEMENT, CHIP!
THE END

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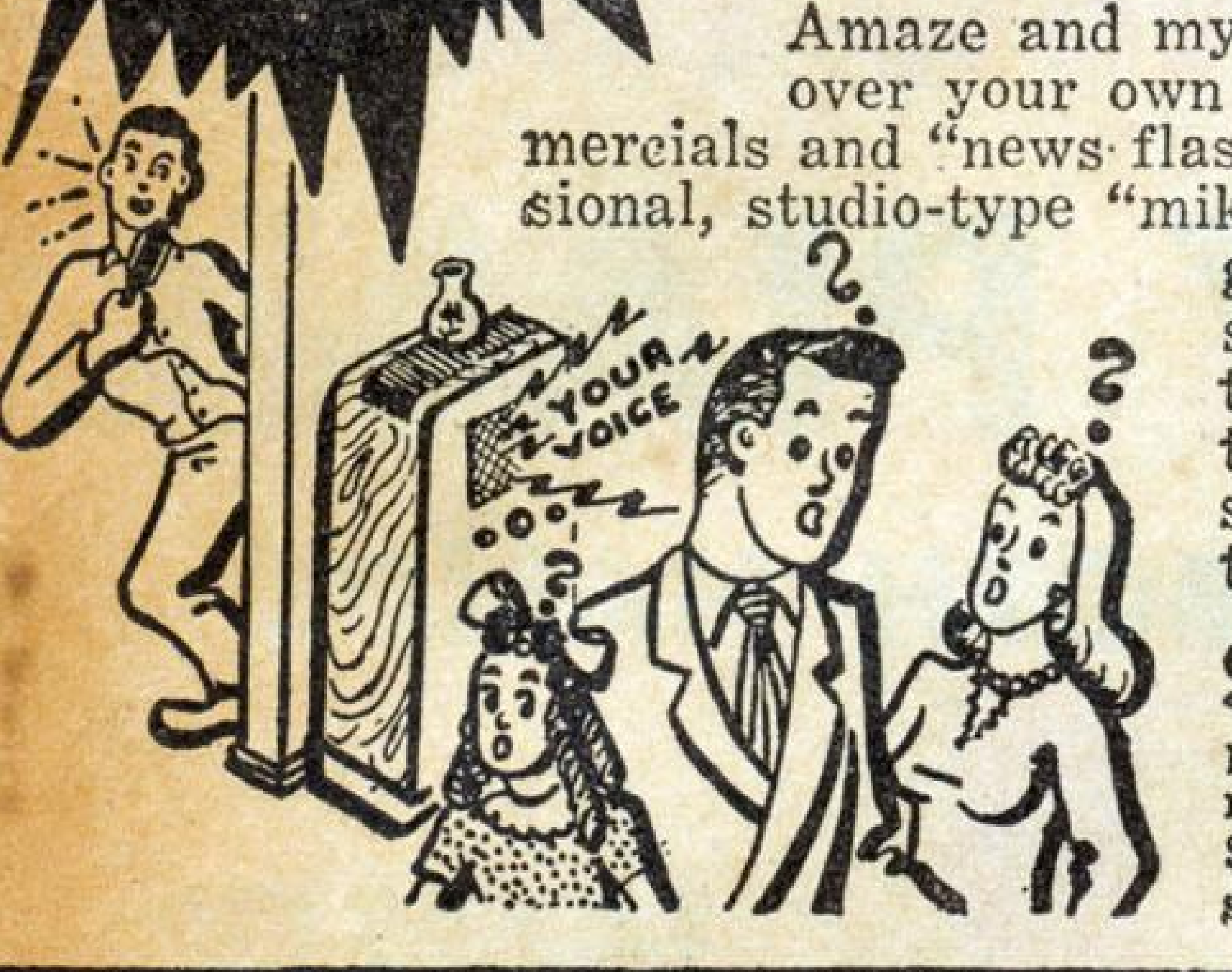

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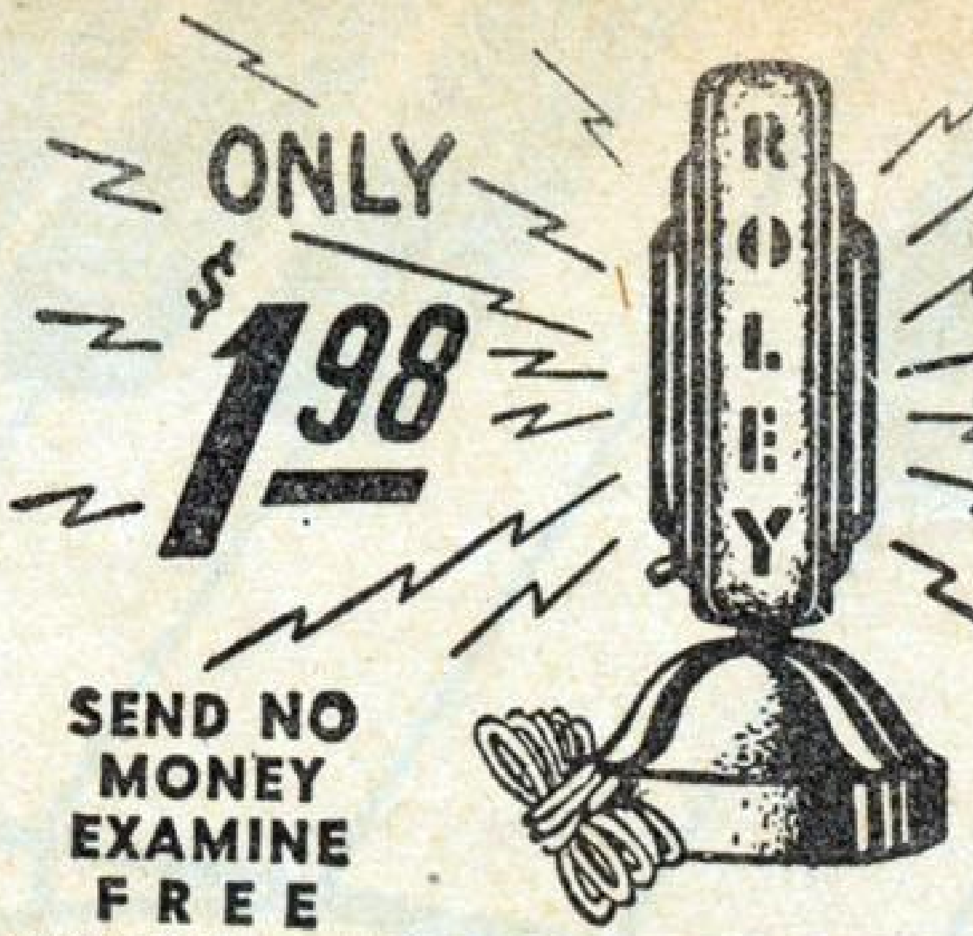

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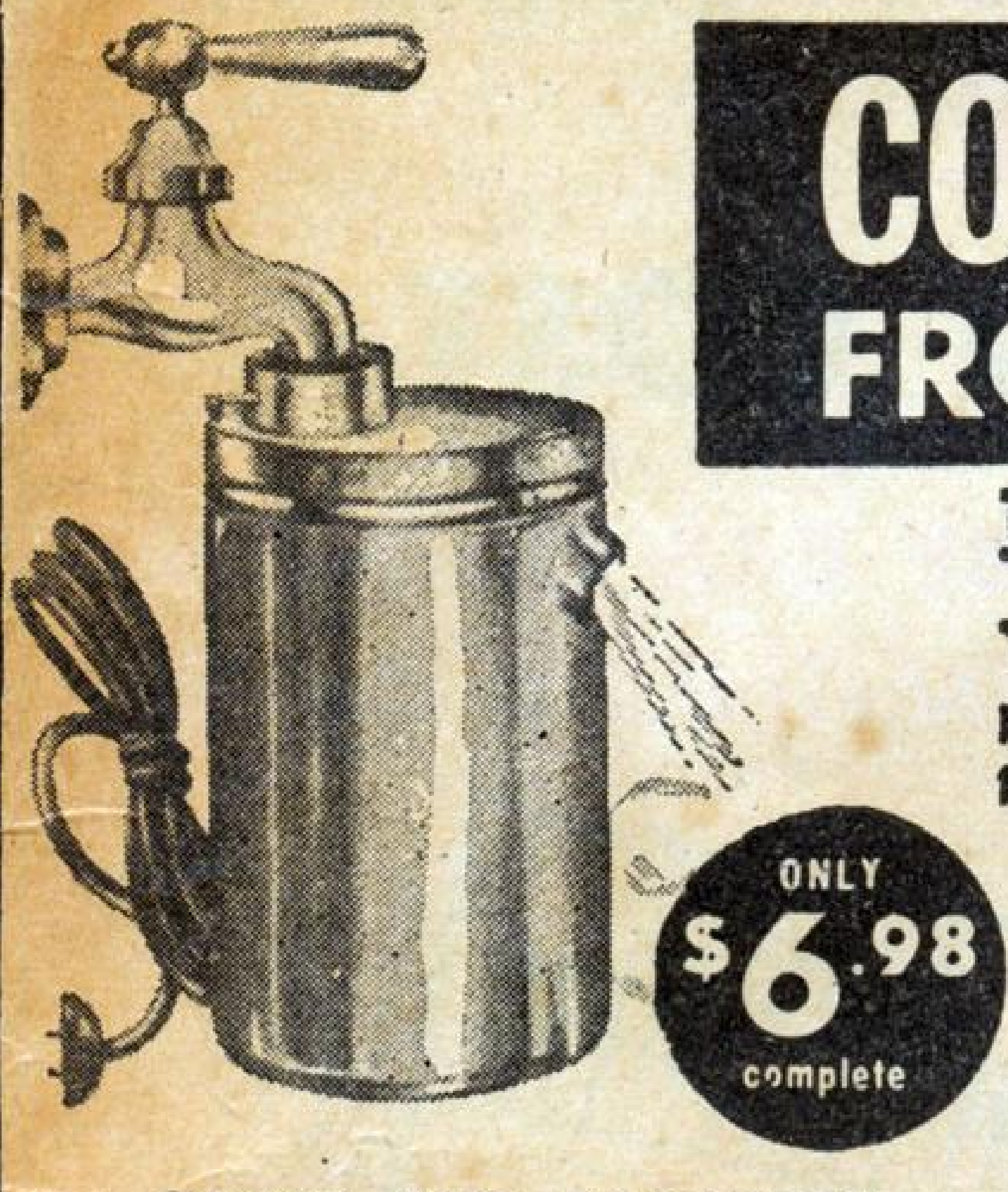

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